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Language and Identity in the Literature of the Seventeenth-Century New England Puritans

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Language and Identity in the Literature of the Seventeenth-Century New England Puritans

Alison Kate Stanley

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
King's College, London

August 2011

Abstract

Seventeenth-century migrants to New England found themselves in a new and unsettling situation, surrounded by alien European and indigenous groups, whose different languages, cultures and religious beliefs questioned and sometimes threatened the beliefs of the settlers. This thesis examines the points at which the colonists came into contact with other cultures, and analyses what these interactions can tell us about how identity was constructed and displayed in the period. I do this largely through analysis of the ways language was used and discussed in contemporary texts printed in London and Massachusetts which aimed to influence readers' views of colonial identities. By looking at a series of specific challenges when language or issues relating to it became contentious or important, as detailed below, I argue that language was intrinsically connected to English Puritan identity in the period.

My first chapter discusses contemporary language textbooks by Williams and Eliot, analysing the ways in which different presentations of similar Native American languages offer insights into the ways contemporary thought linked language to culture and identity. The next two chapters examine the ways language was linked to Puritan religious identity by discussing colonial responses to two new challenges to their beliefs in the 1650s: firstly, the request of the Praying Indians to be accepted into the colonial churches; and secondly, the denunciations of the colonial churches made by visiting Quakers. The final two chapters discuss questions of language and translation during the traumatic events of King Philip's War. Chapter four analyses war writing which used Old Testament narratives to re-interpret early defeats, and to excuse acts of violence and destruction perpetrated by colonial forces. The final chapter examines depictions of Indian language during the war, and argues that refusals to discuss the problems of intercultural translation and descriptions of Indians speaking broken English are two manifestations of the same changing attitude to language and identity.

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A version of Chapter One, 'Linguistics and Colonialism', has been published as "To Speak With Other Tongues": Linguistics, Colonialism and Identity in 17th Century New England', in *Comparative American Studies* (Vol. 7, No.1, March 2009) 1-17

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Note on Quotations

Original spelling and punctuation have been retained in all quotations made directly from the original seventeenth-century sources, except capitalization and italicization in titles.

Quotations from the Bible are from the King James Version.

Introduction

'A soft tongue breaketh the bone.'¹

This saying, recorded in the Proverbs of the Old Testament, would have been familiar to seventeenth-century New Englanders. Its emphasis on the power of language to influence the material world is an important key to the period, which was one in which writing a theological pamphlet could lead to public execution; printing a language text could gain you a charter for your colony; or publishing a war narrative could change the way those across the ocean regarded your settlement. However, the proverb also captures the violence which language can trigger, and this will also be seen to have been an element in the construction of seventeenth-century language and identity, in particular in the relationships between Puritan colonists and other groups, such as Quakers and Native Americans.

Language, Identity and Power

This thesis argues that there is a crucial connection between the language we use and the ways in which we construct, understand and display our identities. Language is an integral element of human interaction, and is one of the means by which we establish our relationships to others. In this thesis, I will trace some examples of the ways in which the use of language to construct a particular individual or group identity can also be linked to the attempts of those in power to consolidate their hegemony, and to the challenges made by those attempting to subvert the status quo.

I am focusing this study in particular on the Puritan colonists who settled in New England in the seventeenth century. This is for two reasons. I was intrigued by the idea that studying colonial Puritanism would throw a new light on the ideas which English Puritans thought too obvious to need stating, but which might be less apparent to us now. As anyone who has spent time in a foreign country must know, it is when we are taken out of a familiar environment and come into contact with different ways of doing things that our own cultural assumptions are revealed to us most clearly. As those who have commented on the tendency to colonial cultural conservatism have noted, we often react to such new situations by reasserting our own cultural values more strongly and clinging harder to our previous practices; however, such circumstances can sometimes also lead to a reassessment or a development of our ideas – something which many early modern colonists were afraid of, not only in America, but also in Ireland. The New England colonies are specifically interesting, due to the

¹ Proverbs 25.15, quoted in Jane Kamensky, *Governing the Tongue: The Politics of Speech in Early New England* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) p.15

fact that a colonial printing press was set up there early on, and was producing books by 1640; this gives us the chance to study truly colonial texts, unlike those in other colonies where printing had to be carried out in London, and perhaps changed or censored by English editors while being put through the press. The second reason for focusing on Protestantism, and in particular radical Protestantism, is that it has been associated with a fascination with language. One recent critic, for example, asserts that 'godly speech [...] lay at the very centre of New England's culture' (Kamensky, p.5). In investigating how a culture that put enormous emphasis on language and its interpretation was challenged by coming into contact with Native American and other languages, I hoped to have a particularly relevant object of study.

My thesis, that language and identity are connected, has been developed in particular through reference to the work of Bourdieu. In *Language and Symbolic Power*, he argues that 'one must not forget that the relations of communication *par excellence* – linguistic exchanges – are also relations of symbolic power in which the power relations between speakers or their respective groups are actualized' (Bourdieu, p37).² In other words, language has a meaning and a significance beyond the immediately obvious message intended to be conveyed and understood. As Bourdieu explains:

Quite apart from the literary (and especially poetic) uses of language, it is rare in everyday life for language to function as a pure instrument of communication. The pursuit of maximum informative efficiency is only exceptionally the exclusive goal of linguistic production and the distinctly instrumental use of language generally clashes with the often unconscious pursuit of symbolic profit. For in addition to the information expressly declared, linguistic practice inevitably communicates information about the (differential) manner of communicating, i.e. about the *expressive* style, which, being perceived and appreciated with reference to the universe of theoretically or practically competing styles, takes on a social value and a symbolic efficacy.

(pp.66-7)

Bourdieu argues that it is not only the information encoded in the words which has a significance for speaker and listener, or writer and reader; instead, the style, the form of language, the choices made by the speaker or writer about how to express themselves – all these are also means of demonstrating the speaker's social relationship to the person they are addressing. And Bourdieu's claim that this is understood and interpreted 'with reference to the universe of theoretically or practically competing styles' demonstrates how closely this ability to assimilate implied cultural and social meanings is tied to the particular significance a culture attaches to words and phrases and

² Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. by John B Thompson, trans. by Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1991)

accents. To quote Bourdieu once more: 'Grammar defines meaning only very partially: it is in relation to a market that the complete determination of the signification of discourse occurs' (p.38).

I interpret Bourdieu's metaphor of the 'market' as being the culture in which utterances have particular values and worth, so that in choosing between several different forms of utterance speakers express not only their meaning, but also give different cultural associations and resonances to the words. Bauman, in his very interesting study of Quaker speech, highlights the same idea, defining such associations 'as a complex set of communicative resources available to members of particular speech communities for the communication of social and expressive as well as referential meaning'.³ In the context of Puritan New England, these competing styles were associated with several different areas of life: social rank; gender; religious sects; status within a religious group, i.e. whether an individual was a full member of the congregation or a non-baptised observer; nationality. This was a period, as Kamensky argues persuasively in her study of oral culture in the colonies, in which language was at the centre of the structure and governance of society (Kamensky, pp.3-16). I will now discuss some of the reasons why this was the case: the particular circumstances which had led to the role of language being such an important one in the seventeenth-century colonies.

Language in the New World

From the beginning, the New World was a site in which language was a crucial element in encounter, exploration, and colonization. As several critics have pointed out, 1492 was not only the year Columbus crossed the Atlantic to America, but also the year that the grammarian Antonio de Nebrija persuaded Queen Isabella of Spain that 'Language is the instrument of empire'.⁴ From Columbus' first mistaking of the American continent for Asia onwards, mistranslations and misunderstandings caused by imperfect understanding and European desires to see what they expected or wanted to find, were rife. Greenblatt and Axtell both discuss misreadings by the early explorers,⁵ while Gentzler points out in his study of translation in the Americas that

So many mistranslations of American people, landscape, culture and artefacts have occurred in the process of the European explorers and colonizers translating and domesticating that which they encountered into their own terms, concepts, and world views that any accurate description becomes impossible.⁶

³ Richard Bauman, *Let Your Words Be Few: Symbolism of Silence and Speaking among Seventeenth-Century Quakers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) p.5 Further references are given in the text

⁴ Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993) p.118

⁵ Stephen J. Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) pp.87-109; James Axtell, *Natives and Newcomers: The Cultural Origins of North America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) pp.50-1 Further references are given in the text

⁶ Edward Gentzler, *Translation and Identity in the Americas: New Directions in Transatlantic Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), p.6 Further references are given in the text

Many critics, beginning with Greenblatt's influential study *Marvelous Possessions*, have discussed the ways in which language and translation shaped the encounter between Native and European cultures in the Americas. I discuss these in more detail in the historiography section of this introduction, but I wanted here to justify my use of this criticism, which largely focuses on the initial encounters between groups who were not yet aware of just how different their languages and cultures were to each other. The situation in seventeenth-century New England was obviously very different, involving colonists rather than explorers, and a situation in which both groups had built up more knowledge of each others' cultures. There are, however, interesting parallels between early descriptions of encounter and seventeenth-century texts, which highlight the continuing importance of language interaction into the colonial period. To a certain extent this is due to the fact that although the Native Americans of the region had experienced a certain amount of contact with Europeans by this point, and although the English settlers had access to books and reports describing the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas, the majority of the individuals in both groups would not have previously experienced what it was like to live in long-term, regular contact with a culture characterised by a language, beliefs, and assumptions so different to their own. Many of them would not have previously encountered the other group at all except through the accounts of others.

This can be seen as the background to the fact that some of the details of early encounter seem to persist even into seventeenth-century New England accounts. In particular, discussions of translation by historians of the early contact period often bear a strange similarity to seventeenth century texts. Greenblatt and others point out how the early explorers seem unable to formulate any response to the Indians they encountered between either accepting them as entirely normal, or rejecting them as barely human; and similarly describe their languages as either completely comprehensible or as non-human noise (*Marvelous Possessions*, pp.86-118). This common response over a long period of time and different European and Native American cultures is fascinating in itself, and I will argue in chapter five that it demonstrates the importance of language in the ways the English responded to colonial encounters. Gentzler, in particular, has argued that translation has continued to be of crucial importance on the continent, suggesting in his study that 'translation is not a trope but a permanent condition in the Americas' and that 'translation in the Americas is less something that happens between separate and distinct cultures, and more something that is *constitutive* of those cultures' (p.5).

Nor did this emphasis on language come only from the colonial side of the encounters that took place in New England. The Native Americans of the region brought their own preoccupations with language and different ways of thinking about it. At a fundamental level, Algonquian and Indo-European languages are very different; Algonquian languages classify gender by animate and inanimate, rather than male and female, and are constructed by connecting morphemes, so that their words are simultaneously longer and much more precise than Indo-European ones. As John Eliot explained in

his *Indian Grammar Begun*, in Massachusett it is possible to '*speak much in few words*, though they be sometimes *long*'.⁷ The speakers of Algonquian languages such as Massachusett and Narragansett also had particular ways of expressing themselves which were unfamiliar to the English: 'similitudes greatly please them', Roger Williams noted.⁸ The Narragansett people observed linguistic taboos which Williams could sympathise with, even if they were unlike anything he had experienced in Europe:

they abhorre to mention the dead by name, and therefore, if any man beare the name of the dead he changeth his name; and if any stranger accidentally name him, he is checkt, and if any wilfully name him he is fined; and and (*sic*) amongst States, the naming of their dead *Sachims*, is one ground of their warres; so terrible is the King of Terrors, Death, to all naturall men.

(p.202)

All commentators agreed that the Algonquian speakers, like the Puritans, took language seriously, and had a highly developed tradition of oratory:

Their manner is upon any tidings to sit round double or treble or more, as their numbers be; I have seen neer a thousand in a round, where *English* could not well neere halfe so many have sitten: Every man hath his pipe of their *Tobacco*, and a deepe silence they make, and attention given to him that speaketh; and many of them will deliver themselves either in a relation of news, or in a consultation with very emphaticall speech and great action, commonly an houre, and sometimes two houres together.

(Key, p.55)

In short, the Native Americans of the New England region were as concerned with matters of language as the Puritans, although this was expressed by them in very different ways.

Language in the Seventeenth Century

The early modern period was one in which language became of crucial importance in national and religious identity, perhaps especially so in the seventeenth century. Richard Bauman argues that 'the seventeenth century in England is coming to be understood as a period of extraordinary intellectual preoccupations with language, marked by a complex array of attempts to reconceptualise, reform, and reconstitute language as an instrument in the service of the mind, the spirit, and the social order'

⁷ Ives Goddard and Kathleen Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusett* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1998) pp.486, 494; John Eliot, *The Indian Grammar Begun* (Cambridge, 1666) p.6

⁸ Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643), p.132 Further references are to this edition, and are given after quotations in the text

(p.1). It was a period in which ideas about linguistics and about the formation and significance of languages were being challenged and developed, as were ideas about the best methods of language teaching.

The Reformation had had an enormous influence on the ways that language was understood in Protestant countries, and this was particularly marked in the New England colonies due to their strong association with radical Protestantism, and their self-identification – for the first fifty years at least – as a specifically religious colony. Reformed Protestantism emphasised the importance of access to the vernacular scriptures, and made the use of the vernacular in services a mark of their difference from what they regarded as the superstition and ignorance of Catholics, who worshipped in Latin, which most people did not understand. They were also associated with a particular style of language, plain speech; as Round explains, this allowed them to emphasise their purity and separation from worldly society by using

a vernacular language purged of ‘innovation’ and vanity, thus creating within the larger discourse of English and conversation a specialized ‘speech community’, which could be recognised by its nasal twang and its preference for words like abomination, backsliding, discipline, and godly.⁹

Language can thus be seen to have been a key element in the definition of a Protestant identity, and even more forcefully so in its radical Puritan forms.

Furthermore, there were also divisions within Protestantism over the need to learn classical languages. Many Puritans were highly educated and often multilingual, and the study of the Biblical languages – Hebrew, Greek and Latin – was considered essential to improve biblical translation and get closer to God’s original word. However, other elements of radical Protestantism, which can be glimpsed in Bunyan and later in the Quakers and other radical sects that emerged during the Interregnum, rejected too great an emphasis on the socially elite learning which involved the study of ancient languages, and insisted instead on the influence of God directly on the believer’s heart. Anne Hutchinson and the Antinomians were an early example of this in New England in the 1630s. Such radicals, however, were akin to the Puritans in their emphasis on specific forms of speech which identified them as members of a particular sect; the Quakers, in particular, took the Puritan idea of plain speech to an extreme, and their adoption of the familiar forms “thou” and “thee” rather than “you” was regarded as a rite of passage for them, a religious “coming out”. As Kamensky explains:

⁹ Phillip H. Round, *By Nature and By Custom Cursed: Transatlantic Civil Discourse and New England Cultural Production, 1620-1660* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999) p.5

English nonconformists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries made the relationships between Word and flesh, words and deeds, central tenets of their faith. In their religious beliefs as well as in their social and spatial arrangements, early New Englanders were not simply people of words but, more pointedly, people of the Word.

(pp.5-6)

In short, religion was fundamentally tied to language choice in the period, and the way an individual expressed themselves could often identify them with a particular religious viewpoint.

These different ideas and emphases on language converged in New England in the seventeenth century, making language highly important in this time and place. Puritan colonialist rhetoric was so insistent on the idea of a virgin land, an empty place they could inhabit for their godly experiment, that until relatively recently – as I argue in the section on Native Studies in the historiography below – the role of Native American groups in the period's history had not been the focus of much research. However, the Native American influence in the region was hugely important. Whether in teaching early settlers the necessary skills to survive in a new environment, trading with them, fighting beside or against them, or discussing religion with them, the Native American groups who interacted with the Puritans of the New England colonies had an enormous effect on their development. In this thesis, one of my important arguments will be that the very fact that the importance of Native American contributions to their colonies is downplayed in the texts is an indication that the Puritan settlers were aware of its significance and reluctant for it to be revealed.

Identity

I discuss issues of identity, and its creation and display, throughout this thesis. I am aware that the term “identity” is a very broad one, and it will be necessary to discuss what I mean by it. In doing so, I do not intend to try to provide a general definition of identity: such a question would be a lifetime's work for a philosopher, and as such is somewhat beyond the remit of this thesis. Instead, I explain how identity will be useful to this argument.

In using the term “identity”, I intend to emphasise how individuals in the period saw themselves as belonging to a particular group. Such groups might be religious, social, cultural, familial, colonial and national, and each individual would consider themselves to be part of multiple groups – so, for example, a woman might not only identify herself as an inhabitant of the New England colonies, but also still see herself as English; at the same time, she might self-identify as a Protestant, and a Puritan (or a Quaker, or a Baptist), and also have hopes that she was one of the Saints who were elect by God to be redeemed; and simultaneously understand her social position to be among the

colony's elite due to being a member of a powerful family, and to structure her daily life by the work traditionally carried out by women – which would also vary depending on her marital status.

This list is not meant to be typical or to imply that the seventeenth-century colonists spent their whole time evaluating their different forms of identity. I am merely demonstrating the ways in which an individual could simultaneously understand themselves as being a member of multiple groups. Usually, this was not a problem: for the majority, their social, religious and national identities must have overlapped relatively harmoniously. Scanlan, for example, has noted how Englishness in this period was associated with the idea of Protestantism, so that the two identities were often understood to be two facets of the same thing.¹⁰ For some, however, tensions might arise between their allegiances to different forms of identity: English Catholics were distrusted partly because they were perceived to have divided loyalties between their nation and their religion, which claimed ultimate authority for the Pope. Similarly, Quaker women were condemned as behaving in an unfeminine ways when their religious beliefs inspired them to preach in public and to defy male authority, as will be discussed in chapter three.

In talking about “allegiances” to particular groups, I do not mean to imply that these forms of identity were consciously-made choices, with several options open before every individual. Rather, most categories would appear to be entirely natural to most people presented with them – the majority would understand themselves to have been born a certain gender, nationality, and social class. These might to varying degrees change over time, for example through migration or marriage; but on the whole there was a much stronger sense of social and cultural stratification than we are now used to. The exceptions in this period were the allegiance to a colonial identity, which was a deliberate choice for the first generation of settlers, and also for many of their children who opted to return across the Atlantic; and, significantly, religious identity. Before the Reformation the Catholic Church included the vast majority of Englishmen and women, who might vary in their levels of interest and success in spiritual affairs, but not in the basic fact of their membership in the Church. By the seventeenth century, however, individuals were faced not only with the competing claims of Catholicism and Protestantism, but with a growing spectrum of beliefs within Protestantism, some accepted and others attacked as heresy. During the Interregnum, the lack of government control and the breakdown of censorship led to the formation of many different religious sects such as the Quakers, Diggers and Levellers. As a result, religious identity was much more a matter of individual choice and inclination than it had been for many centuries.

In short, in discussing “identity” in this thesis, I intend to discuss the ways in which individuals in the period saw themselves as being part of a particular group, whether consciously or unconsciously. In this thesis I will discuss self-identification with national, colonial and religious groups in particular.

¹⁰ Thomas Scanlan, *Colonial Writing and the New World, 1583-1671* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)

Such forms of identity were more open to individual and conscious choice, and as a result texts of the period devote more time to discussing, analysing, defending and attacking such choices than they do other forms of identity, such as gender. Different chapters will discuss the identities and allegiances of different elements within the colonies, ranging from individual men and women to the colonial authorities; who specifically is being discussed will be made clear in each chapter, although in order to facilitate discussion, I often assume a consensus of Puritan or colonial view which is an obvious simplification of the historical reality. In doing so, I am usually attempting to set a much more specific group against this background of a generally accepted norm; such generalisations are the price of trying to discuss these issues within a limited space.

Methodology

My methods for the thesis are strongly interdisciplinary, making use of literary, historical, linguistic, ethnohistorical and theological scholarship in order to throw new light on an extensively studied period. In particular, I have used close readings and literary analysis in order to approach texts which have rarely been considered in literary terms, being more often used by historians as primary sources. Although usually dismissed as having little literary merit, these sources contain a wealth of information which has been little noticed, because they tend to be read only at the level of the surface information recorded in them. In this thesis I have attempted to use techniques associated with literary analysis to look at these source materials in greater depth, and to analyse what seventeenth-century writers' use of genre, language and style can tell us about their understanding of the world they lived in.

My research covers a wide range of the texts produced in seventeenth-century New England. These are drawn from a variety of forms and genres, and include language textbooks, captivity narratives, primers, catechisms, psalm books, deathbed speeches and translations into and out of Native American languages, which will be described in more detail in the chapter summaries later in this introduction. They are all connected by having been written by Puritans living in one of the New England colonies, although the books themselves might be published on either side of the Atlantic, or both. They are also linked in that they were written by those who had in some way come into contact with a group who challenged them with their different ideas and beliefs; much of my thesis focuses on their interactions with the Native American inhabitants of the region, although I also discuss the influence of other groups such as Quakers. Some of the writers whose texts I examine were only minimally influenced, or retreated into a conservative defence of their own culture in response to ideas which were new to them; others' lives were changed by their experiences.

One method I use in particular is a discussion of absence. As Arthur Conan Doyle warned us, the fact that the dog did *not* bark in the night-time can itself be significant; and I begin several discussions in this thesis by asking why, given our knowledge of the historical circumstances, certain issues are *not* discussed by writers. Obviously, this might be a dangerous path to venture down, since the reasons why a discussion did not happen can be many and varied; but I will argue that in certain, very specific, cases, it is possible to see writers as deliberately avoiding a subject which they found threatening, or which put them in a bad light. I will argue that this reluctance to approach a subject which must have been important is as significant as anything which the pamphleteers of the seventeenth century debated at length. In particular, issues relating to language and translation can often be seen in this way, as can the colonies' relationships with Native American groups. The fact that colonial writers could portray such relationships as marginal and unimportant makes them all the more worthy of study, given that with hindsight and the use of other contemporary texts we can see that they were not: we learn about people from what they are reluctant to talk about as much as what they are eager to discuss. I have attempted to demonstrate in each case where I look at an absence that there is good evidence for supposing that it is not only due to a lack of importance; in doing so, I hope to throw light on areas of Puritan colonial experience which have previously been overlooked because their absence has prevented them from being raised as a point for discussion.

In investigating Puritanism in New England, I hope to examine what happens when Puritan ideas, language and prejudices came under pressure by being forced into contact with other, radically different cultures. It is not when we feel secure and are surrounded by the familiar, the sympathetic, and the similar that we are forced to question and articulate the way we see the world, but when we come into contact with different ways of doing and thinking. And as Peter Lake argues, the best way to understand a group can be through their attacks on others.¹¹ Although I have looked to some degree at the reactions of colonists in print to French Catholics in Canada and the Quakers when they arrived in New England in the 1650s, by far the greatest part of this thesis examines their interaction with Native American groups.

This emphasis is for two reasons. Partly, it is because the strong awareness of both colonists and Native Americans that their cultures had widely different assumptions and expectations throws their reactions to each other into greater relief. Furthermore, although there were very significant differences in language, culture and religion between the French Catholics and the English Protestants, for example, these differences were well established in the period and could to some degree be taken for granted, mentioned only by glancing allusions in texts; although this does not make such differences less interesting or significant, it does make it more difficult to discuss them. The interactions between Native Americans and New England colonists in the seventeenth century,

¹¹ Peter Lake, "A Charitable Christian Hatred": The Godly and their Enemies in the 1630s' in Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, eds, *The Culture of English Puritanism 1560 – 1700* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996) 145-83

however, forced the Puritan colonists into contact with a group whose ideas, beliefs and world-view were in marked contrast to their own; I argue that this forced them to reconsider and sometimes redefine their national, regional, religious and cultural identities.

I should note here that although I make great and grateful use of the increasing amounts written on Indian history, culture and literature since the 1970s, this is not primarily a Native Studies thesis. In discussing the adaptation of Puritanism to the New World, the existence of Native American cultures and their influence on the ideas, beliefs and practices of the colonists is a crucially important fact, and it seems to me that studies which ignore this are missing a vitally important element of the area's history. However, my aim in this thesis has been to study the ways in which Puritanism developed in America, and so although I consider the study of Native American culture and history to be highly important, its study is not my primary aim in this thesis. Where Native Americans became Puritans, I have made them central to my discussion – for example, in Chapter Two, which analyses the Praying Indians and their place in colonial society – but otherwise, although I have tried not to ignore their side of the story of the region, I have not focused directly on Native Americans.

Finally, I want to touch on the fact that my thesis focuses largely on issues of language and translation, including discussion of genre and linguistic register and the structuring of narratives. In doing so, I follow the lead of scholars such as Bauman and Kamensky, who have called for more attention to be given 'not only to ideas about language, but to *functions* of language, to the role of language as structured by and giving substance to ideology, social relations, groups and institutions. This is not only language as thought about, but language as *used* by society at large to enact or negotiate social identities and to accomplish social goals' (Bauman, p.5). Similarly, Kamensky notes a recent 'linguistic turn' in historical investigations:

This means that instead of treating language as a window through which distant realities can be glimpsed naked and entire, we have begun to imagine it as a densely woven fabric that is sometimes translucent and sometimes opaque. Rather than simply a mode of communication, speech thus becomes a cultural system whose meanings take their shape from a nexus of persons, places, and times. So, too, scholars have started to think about the *social* laws governing discourse, exploring the extent to which knowing a language – or, more properly, belonging to a 'speech community' – means learning culture as well as grammar. We have begun, in short, to pay heightened attention to the interdependence of language and society. Instead of supposing a one-directional relationship between words and their speakers – a monologue in which people have power over words – we now think in terms of the dialogue through which cultures change the languages that create cultures. In such a schema, speech emerges both as a mirror

of existing social relations and as a force that continually shapes and re-shapes a given society.

(Kamensky, pp.9-10)

Like Bauman and Kamensky, whose work I have found extremely useful and which I will discuss in more detail later in this thesis, I have attempted to discuss the ways in which language played a role in the construction of identity and the ways in which different 'speech communities' could also be associated with different forms of group allegiance.

Critical Survey and Historiography

My thesis is strongly interdisciplinary, and as a result is located on the intersections of many critical fields, while not being directly part of any one scholarly tradition. Although I became interested in colonial New England Puritanism as a student of literature, my focus on the relationships between texts and the culture which produced them has made the work of historians of crucial importance to the writing of this thesis. Similarly, my interest in language and Puritanism has led to me reading works on linguistics and also, to some extent, on theology. While I can position individual chapters in this thesis within particular critical fields, therefore, it is difficult to do the same for the argument as a whole. The historians and critics whose work is closest to mine are those who discuss the creation and display of identity, and in particular linguistic identity; I will discuss these texts first.

What I intend to do in this summary, then, is position my work within several different fields of history and literary criticism, and demonstrate the ways in which they have influenced my work. I will not go into detail about each scholar's position here, due to space restrictions, but give a general idea of the field; the relevant criticism and historiography is then discussed in more detail in each chapter. I will begin by looking at criticism related to language and identity, then go on to discuss the scholarship relating to Puritanism, to Native Studies and Ethnohistory, and to more specific issues such as the development of colonial Quakerism, the events of King Philip's War, and the genre of Captivity Narratives. It is my hope, as I argued above, that by bringing together several different disciplines and fields of study, I will be able to throw new light on a much-studied period.

Language and Identity

Although there is no single field of study which unites scholars interested in the interconnections of language and identity in the New England colonies, more work has recently begun to appear on related themes, particularly in the last decade. Issues of colonial identity have been discussed by Scanlan, Oberg, Wyss, Napier Gray and Bross, who are all interested in particular in the relationship between depictions of the Native Americans of the region and colonial identities. Although I have

areas of disagreement with all these critics, which I discuss in the relevant chapters of this thesis, their discussions of the complex relationships of colonists with both Native Americans and observers in England in the period have influenced my thinking in terms of transatlantic issues, Native Studies, and the formation of colonial identities.¹²

The texts which I have found most useful in their discussions of the interconnections between language and identity are less recent; Bauman's 1983 study of Quaker language, which does not deal directly with the New England colonies, and Kamensky's 1997 study of oral culture in the New England colonies. Although neither directly covers the area I am studying – Bauman is interested in Quakerism in general rather than discussing the situation in New England, while Kamensky is interested in spoken language rather than the written texts which form the basis of my thesis – their discussions of the ways in which language can, in itself, be seen to be a factor in the formation of identity has been enormously useful to me. Bauman's call for more study of 'the culturally patterned use of language as an element and instrument of social life' has not yet been taken up by large numbers of critics, and he and Kamensky both tend to be seen as individuals with an interest in language among other fields of study (Bauman, p.5).

The field of linguistics has obviously produced much more discussion of language and translation, although much of it is highly technical, and relates purely to the development of language rather than to the connection of such developments to the culture which was responsible for them. However, I found Vivian Salmon's 1993 analysis of the development of ideas about language in the seventeenth century to be extremely useful, while Goddard and Bragdon's 1998 book, *Native Writings in Massachusetts*, offers the reader not only a written collection of texts written in this specific Algonquian dialect, but also provides an extremely useful analysis of the grammar of the Massachusetts language and a brief history of the circumstances behind the creation of these written texts.¹³

It has been frequently argued that language was key to the early experience of visiting and settling in America, and this was a feature of an important discussion of the early experiences of encounter between Europeans and Indians, as is argued in Greenblatt's 1990 book, *Marvellous Possessions*. Although Greenblatt discusses events a hundred and fifty years before the period I am studying, his analysis of the attempts of European explorers to categorise and interpret the Native Americans they met has been useful to me, particularly in chapter five. Other scholarship analysing the role of language in America published more recently has discussed the seventeenth century: this includes

¹² Michael Leroy Oberg, *Dominion and Civility: English Imperialism and Native America, 1585 – 1685* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1999); Hilary E. Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity and Native Community in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000); Kathryn Napier Gray, 'Speech, Text and Performance in John Eliot's Writing' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Glasgow, 2003); Kristina Bross, *Dry Bones and Indian Sermons: Praying Indians in Colonial America* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004)

¹³ Vivian Salmon, *The Study of Language in Seventeenth-Century England* (Series III: Studies in the History of Linguistics, Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science) (Amsterdam: John Benjamins B.V., 1979)

Edward Gray's 1999 and Gentzler's 2008 discussions of translation and language in the New World, and Gustafson's study of eloquence in the colonies, published in 2000. Lepore also looks at issues of language, specifically in the seventeenth-century New England colonies, as one element of her very interesting book on King Philip's War, *The Name of War* (1998).¹⁴

Puritanism

As discussed above, the starting point in my investigations for this thesis was a belief that it would be revealing to look at Puritan identity when it was put under stress by coming into contact with different peoples, cultures and ideas in the New World. In looking at the ways in which the New England colonists dealt with these challenges by rearticulating and sometimes redefining their beliefs in their writing, I have attempted to ground my discussion in not only history and criticism about New England Puritanism, but also in its roots in the English Puritanism that was imported to the New World.

Miller's foundational study of the intellectual origins of New England Puritanism in English culture, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts* (1933), set out the definition of the New England Puritans as being largely non-separating Congregationalists; this has been useful to my understanding of their beliefs in general, and also in the discussion in chapter two. Later writers, such as Simpson in *Puritanism in Old and New England* (1955), reacted to Miller by insisting on Puritan religious beliefs, rather than intellectual ideas, as being the key element of Puritanism; they stressed the emotion of the religious experience, and downplayed the connections between Puritanism and socio-economic factors. From the 1970s, critics such as Larzer Ziff attempted to disprove such interpretations, insisting instead on the social, cultural and economic reasons why some individuals were attracted to Puritanism in the period in his book *Puritanism in America* (1973). By the 1980s, scholars had begun to follow up such links between religion and culture, and to look in more detail at specific forms of Puritan belief, such as Holstun's 1987 investigation of Puritan utopias on both sides of the Atlantic, *A Rational Millennium*. Kibbey's *The Interpretation of Material Shapes in Puritanism* (1986) has been particularly useful in its close analysis of the connections between theological rhetoric and a Puritan iconoclasm that eventually destroyed people as well as objects, a claim which she links to colonial Puritan actions in the Pequot War of the 1630s. Similarly, Ralph Houlbrooke's essay on Puritan attitudes to death and last words, 'The Puritan Deathbed, c.1560 – c.1660' was useful in the writing of chapter three.¹⁵

¹⁴ Edward Gray, *New World Babel: Languages and Nations in Early America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Sandra Gustafson, *Eloquence is Power: Oratory and Performance in Early America* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (Vintage Books [Random House], New York, 1999)

¹⁵ Perry Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts 1630-1650: A Genetic Study* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1933); Alan Simpson, *Puritanism in Old and New England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955); Ziff, Larzer, *Puritanism in America: New Culture in a New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973); Holstun, James, *A Rational Millennium: Puritan Utopias of Seventeenth-Century England and America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); Kibbey, Ann, *The Interpretation of Material Shapes in Puritanism: A Study of Rhetoric, Prejudice, and Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Ralph Houlbrooke, 'The Puritan Death-bed, c.1560 – c.1660' in Durston, Christopher and Jacqueline Eales, eds, *The Culture of English Puritanism 1560 – 1700* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996) 122-144

Native Studies/ Ethnohistory

The “New Indian History” developed in the 1970s, a time in which historians were re-examining the histories of “minority groups” in order to challenge previous portrayals. Previously, Indian history had been dominated by writers such as Parkman, Leach and Vaughan, who argued that the English were entirely fair in their dealings with the Indians, and that the latter declined inevitably, due purely to the natural inferiority of their own society.¹⁶ The earliest important text arguing the case of the new Indian history was Jennings, in his 1975 book *The Invasion of America*, which deliberately broke away from the ‘civilisation-savagery myth’ promulgated by previous historians, and argued that English colonists and Native American inhabitants of the region were more similar than had previously been assumed. By raising the estimate of pre-contact Native American numbers and emphasising their contribution to the survival of the colonies, Jennings attacked the view of writers like Vaughan that Indian culture had been naturally inferior to that of Europeans. He also undermined the idea that Puritan society had been essentially just in its dealings with Indians, rewriting colonial history to emphasise their violence, greed and criminality, which he argued had been disguised by their propaganda, which had been accepted as reliable history.¹⁷

However, Jennings still essentially portrayed Indians as passive victims of European duplicity rather than active participants in their own history. Later writers gradually attempted to redress this balance, including Salisbury in the 1982 book *Manitou and Providence*, and Axtell in his collections of essays *After Columbus* (1988) and *Natives and Newcomers* (2001). More recently Richter, in *Facing East From Indian Country* (2001), and Kupperman in *Indians and English: Facing off in Early America* (2000) have discussed the problem of a lack of written sources recorded by the Native Americans of the period, responsible for the one-sided nature of seventeenth-century sources. Richter argues only for an attempt to redress the balance by being aware of the bias of Puritan texts, as does Mignolo in his earlier study of Renaissance literature, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance* (1995), while Kupperman goes further in arguing that ‘all documents of colonialism are the result of a dialogue, and the voice of the colonized is always there, shaping and focusing the statement despite the writers’ own determination to control the story’ (15). Similarly, Wyss argues in *Writing Indians* (2000), her study of Christian Native American identity in the New England colonies, that in such cross-cultural communities, at least, it is possible to ‘read against the grain’ of texts to recover Indian voices despite the original intention of the English writer to suppress them.¹⁸

¹⁶ Leach, Douglas, *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip’s War* (New York: Macmillan, 1958); Vaughan, Alden T., *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians 1620 – 1675* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1965)

¹⁷ Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (New York: Norton, 1976), p.172

¹⁸ Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans and the Making of New England, 1500-1643* (Oxford University Press, 1982) James Axtell, *After Columbus: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Daniel K Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2001); Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2000); Walter D Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2003)

The emphasis in these more recent texts on the idea of interaction and cooperation, as well as conflict, between the different cultures in the New England region has its roots in White's 1991 book *The Middle Ground*. In this text, White examined the relationships between Algonquian Indians and the French and British in the *pays d'en haut* between 1650 and 1815, and argued that the particular circumstances briefly created a neutral area between the two groups, 'a joint Indian-white creation' (xiv) in which the Indians and French constructed shared identities which 'shaded into each other' and allowed them to cooperate (xi). White argues that the inability of either side to dominate the other by force led to a system of cooperation which both sides exploited to achieve their aims, until the Europeans became sufficiently strong that the middle ground collapsed.¹⁹

White's concept of the middle ground, although he limited it specifically to a certain area and time and conditions which produced it, was seized upon by numerous other scholars as a useful way to talk about the frontier in terms other than of simple conflict, and attached to numerous other situations. The concept of an area between cultures, in which they can meet and to some extent influence each other, is an attractive one, and had been expressed before White's work was published, in concepts such as Pratt's discussion of the 'contact zone', which encapsulated a similar idea of a two-way border where exchanges were carried out, which was less one-sided than the idea of a frontier.²⁰ Mignolo, in 1995, had also talked about the idea of a colonial 'third space', in which cultures could interact and adapt to each other rather than remaining confrontational.

Historians after White made use of the idea of interaction in a 'middle ground' on the frontier in discussing the interrelationships of Indians and colonists. Hinderaker and Mancall, in *At the Edge of Empire*, and Jane T. Merritt in *At the Crossroads*, both published in 2003, discuss the complexities of the development of the frontier region in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; Hinderaker and Mancall refer to it as the backcountry, and discuss it in terms of the colonies and their relationship to the metropolis, emphasising how it was a powerful place and difficult for authorities to control. Merritt looks at the same region in the eighteenth century, and traces the movement from cooperation to divisions after the 1760s as both groups in the region became more nationalist. Oberg's 2003 biography of Uncas, *First of the Mohegans*, is a depiction of an Indian leader who, Oberg argues, used the cultural cooperation on the middle ground of the frontier to manipulate the situation in favour of his own people.²¹

¹⁹ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes region, 1650 – 1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) Page references are included in the text

²⁰ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992) pp.6-7

²¹ Eric Hinderaker and Peter C Mancall, *At The Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America* (John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 2003); Jane T. Merritt, *1700-1763* (University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Michael Leroy Oberg, *Uncas: First of the Mohegans* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003)

Quakerism in the Seventeenth Century

Like the arguments in the New England colonies in the 1650s and 1660s, the historiography of the Quakers in New England has tended to be divided sharply into those who have agreed with Quaker interpretations of events, and those who side with the Puritan colonial authorities. This was particularly the case with earlier scholarship; Selleck, in *Quakers in Boston* (1976), writes as a Quaker and was published by the Friends Meeting at Cambridge; his account predictably condemns the actions of the Massachusetts government. Chu, writing in 1985 in his book *Neighbours, Friends, or Madmen*, presents a pro-Puritan viewpoint, arguing that the response of the Massachusetts authorities to visiting Quakers was proportionate to the disruptive nature of their protests, and that, at a local level where Quakerism was less extreme, there was correspondingly much more tolerance and less persecution. Worrall, in *Quakers in the Colonial Northeast* (1980), attempts to demonstrate the variety of response to Quakerism over the different colonies in the region, taking a relatively pro-Quaker stance.²²

Later arguments, however, move away from such binary attitudes, instead looking at specific issues in more detail. Pestana, in *Quakers and Baptists in Colonial Massachusetts* (1991), compares the different treatment given to the Quaker and Baptist movements which emerged at a similar time and place in colonial Massachusetts, and argues that the reasons for such different treatments were tied closely to the different forms each sect took. Kamensky, in her book on colonial oral culture, devotes a chapter to Quaker speech – *Governing the Tongue* (1997) Chapter 4, 99-126, “Publick Fathers” and Cursing Sons’ – while Myles, in ‘From Monster to Martyr’ (2001) discusses the ways in which Dyer used Quaker discourse to gain a voice she had previously been denied and gain control over the shaping of her own narrative.²³

Finally, I should mention Bauman’s fascinating book, *Let Your Words Be Few*, once more, this time in relation to its focus on Quaker language. Although Bauman does not discuss Quakerism in relation to the New England colonies, his analysis of the ways in which language was a crucial element in Quaker identity has been enormously useful to me in this thesis.

Captivity Narratives

Captivity narratives have been extensively discussed by scholars, but the way language and translation are depicted in them has been very little examined, as I will argue in chapter five. The existing criticism has developed in three main traditions. One, exemplified by critics such as Roy

²² George A. Selleck, *Quakers in Boston 1656-1964: Three Centuries of Friends in Boston and Cambridge* (Friends Meeting at Cambridge, 1976); Jonathan M. Chu, *Neighbours, Friends, Or Madmen: The Puritan Adjustment to Quakerism in Seventeenth Century Massachusetts Bay* (Westport, Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press, 1985); Arthur J. Worrall, *Quakers in the Colonial Northeast* (Hanover NH and London: University Press of New England, 1980)

²³ Carla Gardina Pestana, *Quakers and Baptists in Colonial Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Kamensky, “Publick Fathers” and Cursing Sons’, pp.99-126; Ann G. Myles, ‘From Monster to Martyr: Reforming Mary Dyer, in *Early American Literature* 36.1 (2001) pp.1-30

Harvey Pearce and Richard Slotkin, analyses them in terms of cultural archetypes.²⁴ Another examines sensationalism and the rise of the sentimental novel in relation to the narratives, often in connection with the construction of gender and race roles in the period; Burnham, Namias and Faery have recently published on this subject.²⁵ And thirdly, there is an ethnohistorical strand, interest in which dates back to Axtell's 'White Indians' article, and which has been continued by critics such as Strong.²⁶ None of these traditions has been directly relevant to the angle from which I have been examining the texts, although I have found the ethnohistorical criticism useful, in that it attempts to distinguish between what the captives reported and perceived of their experiences, and what they might have meant to their Native American captors, and this provides an important tool in seeing the texts as constructed works rather than merely records of fact. Related to this criticism but not part of it is Lepore's work; although it does not focus directly on the same captivity narratives as my thesis, she covers captivity in a uniquely relevant and enlightening discussion of language, power and conflict in the period.²⁷

Puritan Language and Identity under Challenge

This thesis falls into three general sections. It begins with a chapter looking directly at issues concerning the representation of language and translation in the seventeenth-century New England colonies. The next two chapters look at ways in which the Puritan colonies reacted to two very different challenges to their religious identity by other groups: the Praying Indians through their demands to be accepted into the Puritan community, and the Quakers by their attacks on the colonial idea of their own religious identity. The last two chapters look at the reaction of Puritan writers to coming under pressure during a conflict which came close to destroying the colonies, King Philip's War (1675-6); chapter four examines written accounts of the war by Puritan writers, while chapter five looks more specifically at representations of Algonquian languages during the conflict.

In the first chapter, 'Linguistics and Colonialism', I introduce the main arguments and themes which will be pursued in subsequent chapters. This chapter begins the thesis by discussing seventeenth-century colonial texts which deal directly and openly with language, and analysing the ways in which they connect language with different forms of identity. Through a close examination of Roger Williams'

²⁴ Roy Harvey Pearce, 'The Significances of the Captivity Narrative' in *American Literature* 19:1 (March 1947) pp.1-20; Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600- 1860* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1996)

²⁵ Michelle Burnham, *Captivity and Sentiment: Cultural Exchange in American Literature, 1682-1861* (University Press of New England: Hanover and London, 1997); June Namias, *White Captives: Gender and Ethnicity on the American Frontier* (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill and London, 1993); Rebecca Faery, *Cartographies of Desire: Captivity, Race and Sex in the Shaping of an American Nation* (University of Oklahoma Press: Norman, 1999)

²⁶ James Axtell, 'The White Indians of Colonial America' in *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, Vol.32 No.1 (1975) pp.55-88; Pauline Turner Strong, *Captive Selves, Captivating Others: The Politics and Poetics of Colonial American Captivity Narratives* (Westwood Press: Boulder, Colorado, 1999)

²⁷ Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (Vintage Books [Random House], New York, 1999)

A Key into the Language of America and John Eliot's *The Indian Grammar Begun*, I discuss the reasons why, although both writers aim to introduce English readers to two very similar dialects of the Native American Algonquian language, the texts are constructed in completely different ways. Pointing out the previously unnoticed fact that the two men model their texts on the contemporary European language traditions of the classical grammar and the modern language phrasebook, I argue that they are able to draw on their audiences' cultural associations with these different models in order to achieve different objectives: Williams to increase understanding and trade, and Eliot to further the translation of Christian ideas and practices into Native American culture. I use this analysis both to gain further insight into the motives and relationships of the two men with the Native American groups whose languages they described, and the more general ways in which English of the period used language to construct religious, social, class, and national identity – something which is more defined than is usual in such texts because of their unusual openness in discussing language directly.

The second chapter, 'Translating Praying Indian Identities in the Eliot Tracts' approaches the question of creating, representing and defending religious identity in the period. Unlike much of this thesis, which demonstrates the ways Puritan writers attempted to deny any connections between themselves and Native American culture and language, this chapter examines accounts which depict an unusual process of cultural assimilation and adaptation, as both missionaries and Native converts attempted to persuade their audiences of the genuine nature of Praying Indian conversions. I argue that Puritanism in the period had developed 'signs of salvation', patterns of speech and narrative by which the saved could hope to recognise each other in a world of religious hypocrites and sinners. I then go on to examine the Eliot Tracts, a series of texts written by various authors between 1643 and 1671, and argue that they demonstrate the ways that the missionary writers attempted to adapt the signs of salvation to the realities of the New World. At the same time, transcripts of conversion narratives made by the Praying Indians and transcribed in the Tracts indicate the converts' increasing recognition and manipulation of such signs on their own behalf.

Chapter Three, 'Usurping Colonial Narratives,' turns from looking at colonial contact with Native Americans to their relationship with a very different group. The Quaker visitors who began to arrive in the colonies in the 1650s were, unlike the Praying Indians, from outside the colonies geographically but culturally originated from within Puritanism. Also unlike the Praying Indians, their efforts were not directed at being accepted by the colonial Puritan churches, but at attacking the Puritan religion of the colonies, which they believed not to be reformed enough. Their attacks on the established colonial churches culminated in the execution of four Quakers over the period 1659-61, an act unmatched by any other political or religious authorities in the period, who persecuted Quakers but never had recourse to the death penalty to control them. 1660 was a significant moment in the history of the colonies, who were dealing with difficulties associated with a political crisis due to the Restoration, cultural problems because of the deaths of the first generation of colonial leaders, and peaking

theological tensions which led to the 1662 Halfway Compromise over baptism. I argue that under these stresses the response of the Puritan colonial authorities to the Quaker challenge was exaggerated, while the fact that the Quakers were in essence Puritans themselves and essentially spoke the same language meant that they could manipulate and reframe Puritan discourse in order to report events in their own favour. I argue that the controversy was largely a matter of interpretation, rather than dispute over the facts themselves; and as such, it came down largely to being a matter of language, something which held enormous cultural significance for both Quakers and Puritans.

The fourth chapter, 'In a Glass, Darkly: Methods of Understanding King Philip's War' examines the colonial texts written about King Philip's War, in which the writers attempted to make sense both of the way that the conflict itself did not follow their narrative expectations of God's plan for New England; and also to deal with their own horrific behaviour, including the killing of hundreds of Indians, including old men, women and children, in an attack on the Narragansett Great Swamp Fort. I discuss the narratives and the biblical language which they used in order to present themselves as victims and as justified colonisers in the region, and to frame events in a favourable light. Finally, I argue that placing themselves at the centre of an ideology of Israelites invading Canaan offers a vision of the ethnocentric and rigid cultural identities they would maintain in the future, in which all Native Americans had become 'those who are not a people'.

In my final chapter, 'Speaking with the Enemy: Language and Identity in Seventeenth-Century Accounts of King Philip's War', I examine two opposite attitudes towards Native American language which appear in texts written by the colonists caught up in this conflict. I argue that these texts – which range from bestselling captivity narratives, to news reports, to histories, to epic poetry – either treat communication with Native American captors as being entirely unproblematic and the language transparent, or do the opposite, and portray Native American warriors as being semi-bestial, invariably speaking a 'broken English' dialect rather than their own language. I argue that these two manifestations of language represent two sides of the same coin, and investigate the connections between personal identity and allegiance to a particular group, and linguistic communication. This chapter argues that the reason there is so little mention of language and translation problems in the captivity narratives – something which has gone unnoticed by most critics – is not due to its lack of cultural importance, but rather the opposite; while Rowlandson and others are happy to admit to being so reduced they will eat and enjoy food that would previously have disgusted them, they swerve away from the question of speaking their captors' language and prefer to distance themselves from the topic of how they communicated. I link this to ideas of the connection between language and national identity raised in the first chapter, and argue that these captives do not want to be seen as assimilating. On the other hand, the depiction of the enemies of the colonies, and sometimes even their Indian allies, as speaking broken English rather than their own languages can be seen as a

disturbing emergence of the racism which, it has been argued, developed during this period and marked a decisive shift in the attitude of the colonists to Native Americans in the region.

Through a discussion of the ways in which seventeenth-century inhabitants of New England, whether Puritan colonists, Quaker visitors or Native American inhabitants, used language in the construction of identity, I hope to demonstrate a new side to Puritanism, as revealed in the new surroundings and challenges of the seventeenth century colonies. By looking at familiar writing in a new way, applying literary techniques to works usually seen only as historical source texts, I hope to throw a new light on the period, and trace some of the ways in which the use of language to construct identity was also an important element in the attempts of contemporary individuals and groups to maintain, or hope to achieve, power in the seventeenth-century New England colonies. In my first chapter, I will open the discussion by looking at the issue of language and its relationship to intercultural relationships directly; and I will do so through close readings of two texts usually used solely as convenient sources of historical, linguistic or ethnological data.

1. Linguistics and Colonialism

Introduction

In this first chapter, I want to lay the foundations of the argument I will make in this thesis by demonstrating the connections that existed in seventeenth-century New England between language and social, national, and religious identity. Furthermore, I will look at the ways in which these connections are brought into the foreground in situations where the Puritan colonists came into contact with other groups in the region, and in particular with Native American groups. In order to show as clearly as possible the link between language and the construction of identity in seventeenth-century New England texts, I am going to begin by looking at two texts which deal directly with questions of language. Such a direct focus on the role and nature of language was rare in the period, and I will argue in later chapters that this reluctance to discuss the issue was in itself connected to the very importance of language in identity construction. However, there is one genre of text which approaches the issue openly, if not always directly: language textbooks. In this chapter I will discuss two of the most important of these texts written in the period: *A Key into the Language of America* by Roger Williams, and *The Indian Grammar Begun*, by John Eliot.²⁸

Native American peoples had been living in New England for thousands of years before the arrival of English fishermen, traders and colonists. They had evolved ways of life adapted to the local environment, based on hunting, fishing and a sophisticated form of agriculture which maximised yield while minimizing labour. There were many different social groupings in the region, based on villages and kinship networks. Some, like the Iroquois Great League, worked together in powerful alliances. Many languages were spoken, but there were two main language groups; Iroquoian, spoken in a broad area along what is now the Canadian-US border; and Algonquian, which was spoken by peoples living in a broad C shape which arched around this area, and which included much of the area where early New England colonists settled.

Into this complex social and political situation came European fishermen, explorers and traders, and – from the 1620s and to a much greater extent from the 1630s – colonists and settlers. Their trade goods and guns changed power balances in the region, often leading to local leaders attempting to make alliances with them, and sometimes leading to conflict. But the colonists in New England, unlike

²⁸ John Eliot, *The Indian Grammar Begun, Or, An Essay to Bring the Indian Language into RULES* (Cambridge MA, 1666); Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643) Further references to these editions follow quotations in the text

the Dutch and French settlements at New Netherland and in Quebec, were more interested in land than in trade, and as a result relations with the local inhabitants soured faster and more dramatically.

The Dutch and French intended to establish trading stations in North America, exchanging manufactured goods for furs; but although the English colonists also hoped to make money to support themselves through trading for furs, and indeed did so in the early years of the settlements, they were much more focused than the French or Dutch on long-term colonization as a goal in itself. The original arrivals were the settlers at Plymouth in 1620, who had come from England via the Netherlands, and were attempting to find a place to live where they could maintain a separate church without suffering penalties under English law. Later settlements at Massachusetts and Connecticut were also church-led, although they did not officially separate from the Church of England; instead, they avoided the issue by emigrating, and so gained the freedom to organise their own affairs.²⁹

As a result, the colonists were more interested in acquiring land and learning to survive on it than they were in the Native Americans who they encountered there. Because their interest was primarily in the land rather than interaction and trade with the people occupying it, they were not inclined to make much effort to establish friendly relations with the local Indian groups; on the contrary, England in the period was a crowded place, and the colonists were land-hungry. Their greed for the land around them and their farming methods, which led to the destruction of Native crops and resources, led to friction between settlements, and with the Native Americans themselves.

At the same time as more colonists arrived and acquired land by legal and semi-legal purchases, deception, and eventually force, local Native American groups had been devastated by the diseases which the Europeans brought with them, and which they had no immunity to. Successive waves of virgin soil epidemics killed vast numbers of Native people; some historians estimate that 70-90% of the local population died.³⁰ Leaders, counsellors, food providers were lost, and the English were able to acquire land that fell into disuse as a result. As time went on, however, rapidly growing numbers of settlers created tensions which grew into conflicts. The first which developed into a significant war was the Pequot War of 1636-7, in which an entire political and social group, the Pequot, were wiped out – either killed or absorbed into other Indian groups in the area who had allied with the English. At the same time some Native groups, like the Mohegans, exploited the new political situation to build up political and military power.³¹

The English had little reason to want to become associated with the other groups living around them. Their desire to maintain an English identity, although they were emigrating colonists, kept them apart

²⁹ Perry Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts 1630-1650* (Harvard University Press, 1933)

³⁰ The first to claim this, radically increasing earlier estimates, was Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America* (University of North Carolina Press, 1975); see also Neil Salisbury in *Manitou and Providence* (OUP, 1982); Hinderaker and Mancall, *At The Edge of Empire* (John Hopkins UP, 2003)

³¹ See for example Michael Leroy Oberg, *Uncas: First of the Mohegans* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003)

from the Dutch at New Netherland. Their Protestant beliefs meant that the Catholic French to the north were dangerous, and the radical Puritanism which had encouraged them to emigrate meant that they distinguished themselves from most of their countrymen, and even some of their fellow settlers, depending on their beliefs. Most of all, they regarded the non-European traditions of the Native Americans as uncivilized savagery. Their Puritan beliefs meant that they saw the Bible as central to a properly lived life, and a settled and hard-working existence as being the path to virtue. The dangerous attractions of Native American culture were to be avoided, and their perpetrators either avoided or persuaded of the superiority of the European way of life.

In practice, this meant that the articulation of a Protestant-Puritan, English, colonist identity was often made at least partly through a rejection of other cultures, sometimes openly, but more often subtly and negatively, as I will argue. And this situation is part of the reason for the lack of language texts in New England in this period. I will argue in more detail in chapter five that language itself was such a central part of the construction of identity, of allegiance to particular national, religious or social groups, that to be too interested in the language of other cultures was to risk being seen as associated with them, and to have your own identity questioned. It took special circumstances, then, to publish evidence of your interest in the language of another group.

Language textbooks, however, are forced by their very natures to deal openly and directly with issues of language-learning and translation. As a result, they are more revealing of the relationship between language and identity in the period, and give valuable clues to the ways seventeenth-century New Englanders constructed themselves through language. I will discuss three different forms of identity which the two texts I will examine in this chapter, the *Key Into the Language of America* and *The Indian Grammar Begun*, cast light on: class and society; religion; and nationalism and colonialism. In examining these three concepts in the light of close readings of Eliot's and Williams' texts, I will look in particular at examples of the ways in which language was used to mediate between colonial and Native American cultures. Language becomes most significant when it is placed in conjunction with another language; the differences that become apparent in such a situation force its speakers to regard their own language as being one specific form among many possibilities, rather than taking its specific form for granted. I will also examine theories about language which were debated at the time, which provide a useful background to the writing of these texts, and provide a way of examining how the specific pressures of settlement in the New World changed the thought of the writers.

Language texts have not been much discussed by critics and historians of seventeenth-century New England in the past. Williams' *Key into the Language of America* has been discussed in more depth, because it contains cultural observations and satirical poems as well as linguistic information, and critics have found the implicit dialogues in its structure fascinating; the text as a whole has been

discussed as literature frequently in the past thirty years.³² Similarly, Eliot's endnote to *The Indian Grammar Begun* has been extensively quoted, because in it he describes his relationships with the Native Americans he tried to convert; but the grammatical text itself has been virtually ignored.

Both men have, however, had their lives and the impact of their work discussed more generally by critics and historians. Williams was seen for a long time as an outcast, a religious fanatic with bizarre views. Even historians such as Perry Miller, who admired his sincerity and tenacity in defending his religious beliefs, interpreted him as an antisocial eccentric, who 'took the Bible with a foolish literalness'.³³ Eventually some historians, such as Samuel Greene Arnold, who called him the 'apostle of religious freedom', came to see him as a defender of religious liberty and free speech, and although critics such as Gilpin and Calamandrei argue convincingly that his political actions rose out of radical religious beliefs rather than liberalism, he has generally been interpreted as a positive figure, with critics such as Round and Schweitzer arguing that he demonstrates a praiseworthy acceptance of difference and diversity.³⁴ Eliot, on the other hand, was seen for hundreds of years after his death as a selfless preacher and enlightened missionary to the Native Americans, with historians from Cotton Mather to Ola Winslow writing hagiographical biographies about him. From the 1970s, however, this reputation has been under attack. Francis Jennings' portrayal of him as a hypocrite and an embezzler, using missionary funds for the good of the colonists, began a debate on his motives, which was influenced by the ethnohistorical movement. His attempts to introduce or force European culture onto Native American converts became condemned, while Williams' refusal to interfere was applauded. Some critics, however, such as Vaughan and Cogley, have continued to interpret Eliot's actions in a positive light, and the balance of opinion currently portrays him as misguided, rather than corrupt.³⁵ The most recent lengthy discussion of his work, an unpublished thesis by Kathryn Napier Gray, argued that rather than merely seeing the Christian converts as blank slates on which he could inscribe Christian ideals, he intended to allow the Praying Indians space to create identities through his depictions of them. She sees his linguistic efforts as attempting to preserve Massachusetts as well as change it: 'the ambiguity behind Eliot's motivation is frequently missed: as is often noted, Eliot grafts existing linguistic structures onto an Algonquian language, but,

³² David Murray, "Using Roger Williams' *Key Into America*", *Symbiosis: A Journal of Anglo-American Literary Relations* 1.2 (October 1997) pp.237 – 253; Thomas Scanlan, *Colonial Writing and the New World 1583 – 1671: Allegories of Desire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Ivy Schweitzer, *The Work of Self-Representation: Lyric Poetry in Colonial New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Susan Castillo, *Performing America: Colonial Encounters in New World Writing 1500-1786* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006)

³³ Perry Miller, *Roger Williams: His Contribution to the American Tradition* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1953) p.26

³⁴ Samuel Greene Arnold, *History of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations Vol 1 1636 – 1700* (New York and London: D Appleton and Company, 1859); W. Clark Gilpin, *The Millenarian Piety of Roger Williams* (University of Chicago Press, 1979); Mauro Calamandrei, 'Neglected Aspects of Roger Williams' thought', *Church History* 21.3 (1952) p.239-258; Philip Round, *By Nature and By Custom Cursed* (University Press of New England, 1999)

³⁵ Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (Hartford: Silas Andrus and Son, 1855) pp.526-83; Ola Winslow, *John Eliot: "Apostle to the Indians"* (Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston, 1968; Alden T. Vaughan, *New England: Puritans and Indians 1620 – 1675* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1965); Richard Cogley, *John Eliot's Mission to the Indians Before King Philip's War* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1999)

as is less often observed, his aim is to maintain Algonquian communicative practice in speech as well as text.³⁶

In terms of the two men's work, several critics – including Castillo, Bross, and Napier Gray – have examined how Eliot used his work and the texts he produced in order to create support and manipulate his public image and that of his converts for audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. Schweitzer also discusses how Williams uses his depiction of the Indians as racial others to criticise his own banishment by the colonial authorities (pp.38-9). Gustafson and Scanlan have published chapters discussing the texts written by both men, which I have found particularly helpful in their analyses of the ways in which they were written in order to gain support from specific audiences – an idea which has influenced the work in this chapter. There has been much discussion of the structure and appearance of Williams' *Key* in terms of its resemblance to dialogue, with critics such as Schweitzer and Castillo arguing that it disrupts the idea of a single perspective and speaker, and allows Native voices to be heard as subjects rather than objects (Castillo, pp.60-9; Schweitzer, pp.197-9). Other useful criticism has included the work of Bross and Wyss, who attempt to recover the history of the Praying Indians through these written texts, with arguable degrees of success. Fewer critics have examined the roles of linguistics and translation in his text, but Gustafson, Harris and Round are notable exceptions which I have found useful.³⁷

Possibly the lack of further criticism is due to a belief by critics that a factual work such as a language textbook cannot be analysed through close reading or authorial choices, because it is defined solely by its material. If this is the case, however, I believe that they are mistaken. Instead, I am in agreement with Kathryn Napier Gray, who argues that it is impossible to separate ideas of performance from the texts in colonial writing, and that 'the authors of the texts are equally interested in what the text "does", in addition to what the text means' (18). The choices Williams and Eliot made in writing their non-fictional texts are as significant as any choices made in writing a sermon or describing encounters with Native Americans, as I shall demonstrate in this chapter.³⁸

The Key and the Grammar

The two most important, and comprehensive, language texts written in seventeenth-century New England were *A Key into the Language of America* by Roger Williams, and *The Indian Grammar*

³⁶ Kathryn Napier Gray, 'Speech, Text and Performance in John Eliot's Writing' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Glasgow, 2003), p.132

³⁷ Kristina Bross, *Dry Bones and Indian Sermons* (Cornell University Press, 2006); Sandra Gustafson, *Eloquence is Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), pp.33-8; Scanlan, pp.123-186; Hilary Wyss, *Writing Indians* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2000); Roy Harris 'Introduction' in Harris (ed), *Origins of American Linguistics 1643-1914* (Routledge/Thoemmes Press: London, 1997)

³⁸ I have, however, found it important to keep in mind is that much of this criticism draws its conclusions largely from the texts I am writing about; because there are so few sources available, it is important to be aware of the dangers of circular reasoning.

Begun, by John Eliot. Other English texts which include information about the Native American languages of the region in the period tend to contain no more than a few phrases and names translated into English.³⁹ The *Indian Grammar Begun* and the *Key*, however, both attempt to provide enough linguistic information to give the reader some level of fluency in communicating in a Native American language.

These two texts are particularly useful for purposes of comparison because they are in many ways very similar; the different linguistic and formal choices the two writers made are as a result clearer. Because Williams and Eliot had similar educational and vocational backgrounds before migrating to New England, we can be fairly sure that the fact that the two men chose entirely different models for their texts represents them making different choices, rather than only being aware of one possible model. Because the Native languages they were discussing were very closely related, we can examine their choices of linguistic presentation without having to take into account the possibility that they were dictated solely by linguistic necessity. And finally, the fact that both texts were written partly as propaganda, to gain recognition and sympathy for the authors' causes, allows us to examine the ways in which Eliot and Williams attempted to manipulate specific audiences in England and New England, what assumptions they made, and how they used the study of language to make subtle polemic points.

Through an examination of the ways the two men made different choices and expected their audiences to react to different forms, I want to demonstrate some of the ways in which language was connected to society, religion and nationality in seventeenth-century English culture, in both New England and the other side of the Atlantic.

Connecting and Diverging Lives

Both Williams and Eliot were born in England, Eliot in 1604 and Williams probably in 1606. Although we do not have many details of their early lives, and of Williams' early life in particular, we do know that they both studied at the University of Cambridge, Williams at Pembroke and Eliot at Jesus College.⁴⁰ This suggests that they had similar educational backgrounds, since in the period, the vast majority of those who progressed to university would have learned to read and write at a dame school, and then learnt Latin and sometimes some rudimentary Greek at a grammar school. This is also where they would have learnt grammatical terms, and experienced being taught a language for

³⁹ Few of the other texts published including Indian words achieved more than a word list; see for example William Wood, *New Englands Prospect* (London, 1634). The only text translated into a Native American language was a short catechism by Abraham Peirson, *Some Helps for the Indians; Shewing them how to Improve their Natural Reason, to know the true God, and the Christian religion* (Cambridge, MA, 1658). For a discussion of other missionaries, see William Kellaway, *The New England Company 1649 – 1776: Missionary Society to the American Indians* (London: Longmans, 1961), pp.53, 137

⁴⁰ Ernst, *The Political Thought of Roger Williams* (University of Washington Press: Seattle, 1929) pp.1-12

the first time; the term 'grammar school' refers to the practice of teaching grammar through Latin, vernacular grammars being almost unknown in the period.⁴¹ One Latin grammar suggests that students should memorize the grammatical terms explained in the text, and be able to recite them 'without Book' before they were allowed to study the language itself, confirming that they were not expected to have come across or studied grammar before.⁴² Universities were largely dedicated to the training of ministers; practice in Latin and study of Greek, and occasionally Hebrew, especially in Puritan-influenced institutions, allowed ministers to study original scriptural texts for the purposes of closer understanding and better translation; while training in logic and disputation developed their powers of debate and the composition of sermons later. Theology was also an important part of the curriculum, as was the attendance of sermons, often given in Latin.⁴³

After completing university and taking degrees, both Williams and Eliot became ministers, Williams taking a position as a household chaplain, which may have been an effort to avoid the consequences of nonconformity: it was a position offered at the time by some patrons with "tender consciences" to let ministers avoid the issue of whether to conform to the Church of England or not. Eliot seems to have become a schoolteacher originally, but had become a minister before arriving in New England. Both men migrated to New England as mature adults, arriving on different ships in late 1631.

From this point, however, their lives began to diverge. Eliot taught at Boston in the absence of their established minister, who had returned to England temporarily. By the time he returned to the colony, the congregation were impressed enough by Eliot's work to elect him to office; by this time, however, a group he had known in England had settled at Roxbury, and called him to be their minister. Despite urgings from Boston, he took up the place, and remained there for the rest of his life, not only preaching to the English colonists there, but also teaching in the Roxbury Latin school that was founded sometime before 1645, and from October 1646 preaching to the local Native Americans (Ola Winslow, p.131). Even at the height of his missionary work, he continued to combine it with his ministerial position at Roxbury. Although his missionary work and his converts were not welcomed very enthusiastically by the colonists, and he became unpopular in his attempts to defend his Native converts during the anti-Indian hysteria which developed during King Philip's War in 1675-6, he remained a respected member of the colonial community throughout his life. According to his biographer Ola Winslow, he also played a significant role in the significant cultural events of the community, having a part in the translation of the Bay Psalm Book and the trial of Anne Hutchinson (pp.41-70).

⁴¹ Vivian Salmon, *The Study of Language in Seventeenth-Century England* (Series III: Studies in the History of Linguistics, Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science) (Amsterdam: John Benjamins B.V., 1979), p.36

⁴² Richard Lloyd, *The Latin Grammar. Or, a guide teaching a compendious way to attaine exact skill in the Latin tongue* (London, 1653) p.145

⁴³ John Morgan, *Godly Learning: Puritan Attitudes towards Reason, Learning and Education, 1560-1640* (Cambridge University Press, 1986) p.96

Williams's life developed in a different direction almost as soon as he arrived in the colonies. He became popular with one section of the population, but antagonized others, making some influential enemies. He worked as a ministerial assistant in Salem, then moved to Plymouth in the same capacity when the congregation at Salem refused to formally separate from the Anglican Church. He was a popular assistant; when he later returned to Salem, many followed him, and he was chosen as minister in 1635 after the previous incumbent, Skelton, died (Gilpin, pp.14-49). Despite the approval he gained from one section of the population, however, he antagonized many – including the colonies' authorities – due to his outspoken criticisms of matters he disapproved of in the colonies. He summarized his main attacks on colonial practice as:

First, That we have not our Land by Pattent from the King, but that the Natives are the true owners of it, and that we ought to repent such a receiving of it by Patent.

Secondly, That it is not lawfull to call a wicked person to Sweare, to Pray, as being actions of Gods Worship.

Thirdly, That it is not lawfull to hear any of the Ministers of the Parish Assemblies in *England*.

Fourthly, That the Civill Magistrates power extends only to the Bodies and Goods and outward state of men, &c.⁴⁴

His election as a minister at Salem led to a series of crises in which the colony authorities put pressure on the congregation to change their decision, and then banished him in October 1635. He and his followers were given six weeks to leave, and planned to found a new settlement on Narragansett Bay in the spring, but his continued preaching further antagonized the authorities, and in January 1636 it was decided to ship him back to England immediately; however, he fled in time to avoid being put on a ship to England. Using the contacts he had made and the language skills he had learnt while working as a trader in Plymouth, he was able to acquire land from Massassoit, sachem of the Wampanoag, and founded the new colony of Providence Plantations and Rhode Island. Over the next few years this became a haven for dissidents driven out of the other colonies, and an irritation to its larger neighbours, who made persistent attempts to acquire land within its boundaries. The *Key* was published when Williams was visiting England in 1643, attempting to get an English charter to match the Native gift of the land; Murray and Castillo point out, as do many others, the rich symbolism of him having composed this highly transatlantic text while physically crossing the Atlantic (Castillo, p.60; Murray, 'Key', p.237). The *Key* aided him in gaining fame and public sympathy for his colony, so that the charter for Rhode Island was granted by the British government, and the efforts of Massachusetts to gain the land dismissed. Despite his exile, Williams remained in contact with some members of the colonial community, and aided them in using his contacts and influence to persuade

⁴⁴ Roger Williams, *Mr Cottons Letter Lately Printed, EXAMINED and ANSWERED* (London, 1644) pp.4-5

the Narragansett Indians not to participate in the Pequot War, a decision which played a large part in ensuring an English victory (Miller, *Roger Williams*, p.20).

It can be seen, then, that despite their similar upbringings and early lives, and their basic Calvinistic Protestantism, the two men differed greatly in their relationships to colonial and English society. While Eliot remained within the colonial community throughout his life, Williams was ejected from it, and wrote the *Key* as an outsider. At the same time, he gained much more popularity and sympathy from the English who remained the other side of the Atlantic than did Eliot. The balance of public opinion during the civil war had shifted in favour of tolerating some religious difference, leading to support for Williams' new colony, while there was much suspicion about missionary efforts in New England.⁴⁵ Many feared the money sent for the support of missionaries and the education of their converts was being embezzled by the colonists, and the lack of converts, or indeed any missionary effort, was much criticised. As a result, the position of the two men in relation to colonial society was near to being reversed in the wider transatlantic community.

Both Williams and Eliot developed personal relationships with the local Native Americans, but in very different ways. Eliot seems to have drifted into missionary work rather than feeling any urgent call to minister to the Indians, one critic even suggesting that he became involved as part of a group of local ministers who were sharing the missionary work, only becoming fully interested later, after his preaching had become more successful (Cogley, pp.45-51). From this point on, his relationship with Native American individuals and groups was based on a desire to convert as many of them as possible to Christianity; his learning of the Massachusetts branch of Algonquian came about purely due to his missionary work, a task he needed to undertake in order to advance his proselytising. Williams, on the other hand, came into contact with Native Americans and learnt their language as a necessity of trade, beginning in 1632 according to the historian Gilpin (p.47). Despite claiming that 'I know it to have been easie for my selfe, long ere this, to have brought many of these Natives, yea the whole country' to conversion, he refused to do so, because 'woe be to me if I call that conversion unto God, which is indeed subversion of the soules of Millions in *Christendome*, from one false worship to another'.⁴⁶ For Williams, a Protestant colonist who was not saved was equally as damned as a Native American who had never heard of Christ, and a conversion into a false church was no more than hypocrisy.⁴⁷ As a result, although he recounts dialogues discussing religion in the *Key*, he seems to have made little effort to convert anyone himself.

⁴⁵ John Spurr, 'From Puritanism to Dissent, 1660-1700' in Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, eds. *The Culture of English Puritanism 1560-1700* (Macmillan, 1996)

⁴⁶ Roger Williams, *Christenings Make Not Christians* (London, 1645) pp.11-12

⁴⁷ Gilpin, Chapter 5

Both men, then, had similar backgrounds, but their lives developed in different directions; both were under pressure from some direction and wrote their texts partly in order to persuade or offer evidence of work, and both texts were aimed at specific audiences who the authors hoped would support them.

Algonquian Grammar

Before looking at the ways in which Eliot and Williams structured their explanations of the Massachusett and Narragansett languages, it is worth looking at a modern analysis of the linguistic structures of Algonquian, the language family which includes the closely-related languages studied by the two men. This should demonstrate some of the linguistic problems which faced Europeans learning Native American languages in the period, and illustrate how the ways in which they chose to deal with them were not always primarily based on linguistic clarity.

Massachusetts and Narragansett are now defined as members of the Eastern Algonquian group of languages, the largest subgroup of the Algic language family. What we now call 'Massachusett' seems to have been a collection of a number of local dialects which were closely enough related to be comprehensible to each other's speakers, with the exception of Martha's Vineyard, where the dialect had become distinct enough to make understanding difficult. As a result, they can be classed as variants of one language.⁴⁸ We know little about Narragansett, since Williams' *Key* is virtually the only source describing it which has survived. It was spoken in the region which today is Rhode Island, and either absorbed some elements of the neighbouring Coweset dialect, or Williams recorded them believing them to be part of the language.

Given the lack of information about Narragansett, it is difficult to reconstruct its grammar. Because it was so closely related to Massachusett, however, it is possible for the purposes of this study to assume that the linguistic analysis of the latter language applies in everything except small details to Narragansett as well. Modern linguists describe the difference between the two languages mostly in terms of pronunciation, and Williams notes in the *Key* that

There is a mixture of this *Language North* and *South*, from the place of my abode, about six hundred miles; yet within the two hundred miles (aforementioned) their *Dialects* doe exceedingly differ; yet not so, but (within that compasse) a man may, by this *helpe*, converse with *thousands* of *Natives* all over the *Countray*.

(Key, "To the Reader")

⁴⁸ Ives Goddard, "Eastern Algonquian Languages" in William C. Sturtevant, ed., *The Handbook of North American Indians* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1978) Vol. 15, p.72

As a result, the following analysis of Massachusett, which is based on Bragdon and Ives' excellent description of the language in *Native Writings in Massachusett*, can be applied to Narragansett as well.⁴⁹

Algonquian languages and English have several parts of speech in common, including nouns, pronouns, verbs and particles; but the ways these are formed and grammatically structured in the two languages are radically different (p.510). While much of the grammatical sense in English comes from word order, in Massachusett word order is free, with the position of individual words making no difference to their grammatical sense; instead, verbs and nouns are inflected, with varying endings giving them different grammatical meanings. Massachusett nouns are inflected for gender (animate or inanimate, rather than masculine or feminine as in European languages); number (single or plural), obviation (proximate or obviative); and the absentative, which is used for the dead (pp.486, 494). The verbs are also inflected, for person, subject and object(s), and for mode, tense and the negative (p.510). Due to these inflections, Massachusett often does not need a separate word indicating subject or object, unlike English (p.586). Most striking of all to the reader, Massachusett words are usually created by connecting two or more basic elements, or morphemes; as a result, words can be very long, although so precise in their meanings that the sentences themselves can be much shorter (p.576). Eliot uses examples in the *Indian Grammar Begun* which demonstrate how the language could, as he said, '*speak much in few words, though they be sometimes long*' (p.6): 'I wish thou didst pay me, *Kuppapaumineaz-toh*' (p.36) or 'I wish I did not pay thee, *Kuppapaumun8unaz-toh*' (p.52).

The result of these differences in grammatical structure was that, firstly, Massachusett and Narragansett looked very different to Eliot and Williams from the Indo-European languages they had previously learnt; there were very long words and very short sentences, and concepts which became grammatically untranslatable into or out of English. For example, because each noun contains a prefix indicating its relationship to the speaker, Jesuits in Canada learning Algonquian languages found it impossible to translate 'the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit'; the closest they could get was 'our Father, and his son, and their Holy Spirit'.⁵⁰ Secondly, the categories of Indo-European grammar which the two men thought of as a near-universal template for language were not only inapplicable, but actively unhelpful, in trying to analyse Algonquian languages; one modern linguist asserts, 'The categories of Indo-European grammar, inherited from Greek and Latin, could not be applied to unrelated languages without distorting the unique native point of view encoded in each language.'⁵¹

It is an interesting question whether, as critics such as Edward Gray claim, Eliot had faith that he could communicate ideas without corruption in Massachusett, and that because knowledge shaped

⁴⁹ Ives Goddard and Kathleen Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusett* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1998) Further page references are found in the text

⁵⁰ Victor Egon Hanzeli, *Missionary Linguistics in New France* (Mouton, Paris, 1969) p.60

⁵¹ Regna Darnell, "Languages: Linguistic Change and the Study of Indian Languages from Colonial Times to the Present" in Deloria, Philip J and Neal Salisbury, eds, *A Companion to American Indian History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002) 175-192, p.186

language and truth was universal, language was a transparent vessel; or whether he was aware that there would be problems in his attempts to see Massachusetts in an English frame and translate English concepts directly.⁵² Personally, I disagree with Gray. Although Eliot may have had faith that God would support his efforts, contemporary beliefs about the difficulties of translation which were the result of Babel and the Fall would have discouraged him from seeing language as a 'transparent vessel'; and Eliot was likely to have shared with the writers of the Preface to the Bay Psalm Book a sense of the impossibility of translating directly and uncomplicatedly from one language into another.

Language Models and Texts

Despite these restrictions, and the unsuitability of European grammatical structures to these Algonquian languages, the key to understanding how Williams and Eliot used factual texts to fulfil polemical and political purposes lies in the fact that both men structured their work according to specific European linguistic traditions, which would have had clear associations in seventeenth-century English culture.

There were two main traditions of language text used in Europe in the period contemporary with Eliot's and Williams's work, as will be discussed below. The first was the method traditionally used to teach Latin grammar, through the memorization of paradigms. This was epitomized by the various versions and translations of *Lilie's Grammar*, the version authorized to be used in schools in the period. The other had been developed to teach modern European languages such as German, French and Spanish; it was based on learning phrases, often presented as dialogues, and concentrated on spoken fluency rather than the ability to read and construct sentences the Latin grammars favoured. Of these two available forms, Eliot used the former and Williams the latter to structure their texts, a fact that critics have previously overlooked.

The Indian Grammar Begun

The Indian Grammar Begun has a structure which is so closely modelled on the Latin textbook form, and in particular on *Lilie's Grammar* (the text prescribed by both Henry VIII and Elizabeth's government to be used in schools) that the similarity must have been a deliberate choice on Eliot's part (Salmon, p.37).

Lilie's Grammar was highly influential in the period, and many different editions of it were printed. It was originally published entirely in Latin, but versions in English and bilingual editions with facing-page English and Latin also appeared, along with other grammars which imitated its structure very

⁵² Edward Gray, *New World Babel*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp.56-84

closely.⁵³ Greek grammars also followed very similar outlines; *Lilie's Grammar* was the exemplar of the classical textbook, to such an extent that one critic calls it 'the ubiquitous Lily's grammar' (Morgan, p.179) and another 'the standard Anglo-Latin grammar of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' (Salmon, p.169). The parallel structures of *Lilie's Grammar* and the *Indian Grammar Begun* make it plain that Eliot deliberately followed the form of a classical grammar.

The Indian Grammar Begun is structured section for section and where possible almost word for word identically to the well-known and popular *Lilie*, beginning on the first page. The main text of both begins with almost the same introductory phrase; in Hoole's *Lilie* it is 'Grammatica est recte scribendi atque loquendi Ars', translated as 'Grammar is the art of writing and Speaking aright' in facing-page dual-language translations (pp.2-3); while Eliot begins his *Indian Grammar* with the words 'Grammar is the Art or Rule of speaking' (p.1). Both *Lilie's* and Eliot's grammars then go on to divide grammar into sections; the first in *Lilie's Grammar* is divided into orthography, which consists of letters, syllables, 'right utterance' and 'points of sentences' [punctuation]. Eliot begins by examining 'articulate sounds' and their representation as letters, and then the 'regular composing of them' into syllables and words. In the next section the two books become identical in their ordering, covering the eight parts of speech: pronoun, noun, adnoun [adjective], verb, adverb, conjunction, and interjection. Finally, both go on to discuss syntax, and the formation of sentences from these words, before adding some concluding material: in *Lilie's* case a prayer, in Eliot's an explanation of his motives and methods.⁵⁴

That Eliot deliberately used this form, rather than merely being influenced by a memory of using it in his schooldays is suggested by all the places in which the grammar of Massachusetts did not fit the structure of *Lilie's Grammar*, but he continued to follow the same structure, however inappropriate. This happened frequently, since the structure of Algonquian languages was very different to those of the Indo-European languages Eliot was used to, and to the organisation of Latin which Europeans based their understanding of grammar on. Eliot does not alter his model to suit this; rather, he attempts to force the Algonquian grammar he records to fit the European model.

For example, there are several sections which Eliot evidently feels he must include, because they make up part of the expected structure of the type of grammar he is writing, but which do not fit the needs of someone recording Massachusetts. From the very beginning, where *Lilie's Grammar* and its imitators simply list the letters of the alphabet, Eliot feels it necessary to explain why he chose to use the same alphabet as in English, and why he had to adapt it and add extra letters to represent the sounds of Massachusetts:

⁵³ See for example *The Latine grammar of P. Ramus translated into English* (London, 1585); John Sanford, *A brief extract of the former Latin grammar, done into English* (London, 1605); Charles Hoole, *The Latine Grammar fitted for the use of schools* (London, 1651); James Shirley, *Grammatica Anglo-Latina. An English and Latine Grammar* (London, 1651); JC, gent, *An English-Greek GRAMMAR: compact for the use and benefit of such as desire the Knowledge of that Tongue* (London, 1658)

⁵⁴ Salmon agrees that this structure is typical, p.37

I have thus far been bold with the Alpha-bet, because it is the first time of writing this language; and it is better to settle our foundation right at first, than to have it to mend afterwards.

(p.3)

Despite this claim, it is notable that he uses the Latin alphabet which he was familiar with, despite its drawbacks in being unable to represent sounds used in the Algonquian alphabet; he has to use 27 letters to represent the sounds of Massachusetts.⁵⁵ Kathryn Napier Gray also points out that he did this despite the fact that in Thorowgood's book *Jews in America*, which Eliot contributed to, there was a claim that the Indians already used hieroglyphs to record their language, demonstrating how determined Eliot was to base his written system on European letters (p.117).

Similarly, Eliot includes a section on syntax as do the Latin grammars of the period, but it is very short because, as he notes, 'the manner of the formation of the *Nouns* and *Verbs* have such a latitude of use, that there needeth little other Syntaxis in the Language' (p.23) He also notes throughout the text the places where he has failed to find a direct equivalent of European grammars, continually including observations such as 'there is no form of comparison that I can yet find' (p.14); 'Verbs inchoatives, or inchoatives, I finde not; such a notion is expressed by another word added to the Verb, which signifieth *to begin*; or to be about to do it' (p.16).

The effect of this attempt to force the new ways of grammar to parallel Latin grammar is emphasised by the presentation of his attempts. For example, when discussing nouns, which are constructed in an entirely different way from European nouns, Eliot writes:

A Noun is a Part of Speech which signifieth a thing; or it is the name of a thing.

The variation of Nouns is not by Male or Female, as in other Learned Languages, and in European Nations they do.

Nor are they varied by Cases, Cadencies, and Endings: herein they are more like to the Hebrew form Animate, which endeth in oh, uh or ah...

...Therefore I order them thus:

There be two forms of declensions of Nouns: Animate

⁵⁵ He should, according to one linguist, have needed even more; Du Ponceau suggests that his inaccurate spelling is due to his inability to hear some of the sounds used in Algonquian languages which do not appear in English. Peter S. Du Ponceau, 'Notes and Observations on Eliot's Indian Grammar. Addressed to John Pickering, Esq.' in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* X xiii. Interestingly, Thomas Harriot had already experimented with developing a phonetic alphabet to record the Algonquian languages of the Roanoke area back in the 1580s; there is no evidence that this was ever known to Eliot, who one recent linguist notes 'used only italicisation to indicate what Barbour describes as "a darker -w-". Vivian Salmon, *Thomas Harriot and the English Origins of Algonkian Linguistics*, The Durham Thomas Harriot Seminar Occasional Paper no. 8 (1993) p.10

The first and last sentences conform to the didactic style and structure of Latin grammars, beginning with a definition of the grammatical term, in this case a noun, and ending with a statement of how the group is further broken down and ordered. But rather than giving confident assertions, the central section is expressed negatively – ‘the variation of Nouns is not by Male and Female’, and ‘nor are they varied by Cases, Cadencies, and Endings’ – and expresses a search for knowledge, rather than an expression of evident fact. By describing the ways nouns cannot be ordered before coming to a conclusion and announcing the method he has adopted, Eliot draws the reader into the search for the language during his explanation; but the abrupt transition from the personal and fallible in ‘therefore I order them thus’ to the factual certainty of the affirmation ‘there be two forms of declension of Nouns’ clearly divides the tone of Eliot’s explanations from his grammatical statements which imitate European grammars. His determination to return to the traditional structure despite the differences which necessitated the explanation, and the limitations of that structure, which required him to use an entirely different tone to explain important points, could hardly be more marked.

Many critics have criticised Eliot, as they have the Jesuits and others studying Native American languages, because ‘linguistic investigation revealed what the investigators expected to find’.⁵⁶ Particularly in the case of trying to identify all the parts of speech, this criticism of Eliot is justified; he lists ‘Pronoun, adnoun, Verb, Adverb, Conjunction and Interjection’ (p.5); while a modern analysis of the language only feels it necessary to divide the grammar into nouns, verbs, and pronouns. It would be unsurprising if someone educated to think of grammar as being exemplified in Latin did fall into this trap, and to a certain extent it seems certain that Eliot was hampered in his understanding of Massachusetts by his eager searching for the parts of speech that didn’t always exist – as did the Jesuits, who were also intensively trained in Latin during their education.⁵⁷ Hence Eliot’s asides to explain the biggest differences of Massachusetts grammar from the Latin model his readers knew might be seen as his attempt to smooth over jarring differences to a grammar which was regarded as close to universally applicable.

But Eliot is too aware of the enormous differences between Massachusetts and Latin to have chosen this way of presenting his grammar entirely unconsciously; noting, for example that these are ‘new wayes of Grammar, which no other Learned Languages (so far as I know) useth’ (p.66). He makes

⁵⁶ Harris, vi. It should be noted, however, that Williams has also been accused of such interpretative bias, being sensitive to similarities and blind to differences; Simmons argues that ‘If one examines the kinship data in Roger Williams’ *Key*, for example, it appears that Williams did not recognise any categories in Narragansett that differed from categories in English. Reconstituting the Native kinship system from his data, one arrives at the English nuclear family with additional wives.’ William S. Simmons, ‘Cultural Bias in the New England Perception of Indians’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, 38 (1981) pp.56-72, p.63

⁵⁷ Edward Gray, pp.44-5. Gray argues, using Williams’s *Key* as an example, that Puritan scholars did not apply Latin grammatical structures to Indian languages, attributing this to Puritan anti-scholasticism and the development of new forms of language instruction. Eliot’s use of the structure of a Latin grammar demonstrates that this was not always the case.

too many comments indicating he has thought at length about the best way to present his findings to assume that he simply chose the most familiar and easiest method: 'this manner of speech being a new thing to us that know the European or Western Languages, it must be demonstrated to us by examples' (p.11) He was also willing to innovate, as can be seen in his additions to the alphabet and his invention of the term 'concordances', both of which he justifies to his readers in the text (p.17). I suggest, in fact, that he recognized the inconveniences of the form he chose, but decided to use it anyway, because he believed that this form would fulfil his non-linguistic purposes and favourably influence his readers more than any other. In arguing that Eliot was aware of the deficiencies of his linguistic viewpoint I am not in agreement with the interpretation of Lepore, who argued that because of his use of Indian teachers, translators and interpreters, 'It was Eliot who first began to understand the Massachusetts language on its own terms and not simply in relation to European or Asian languages.' I argue that Eliot did, in fact, see the Massachusetts language *entirely* in relation to Indo-European languages, and that he chose to emphasise this viewpoint despite being aware of the grave problems inherent in doing so. What those purposes were and how he used the form to achieve them will be examined below.⁵⁸

It is also interesting to note that this insistence on using a Latin form even when the scholar was aware that it was not the most useful was not confined to Eliot. The linguistics scholar Hanzeli notes not only that 'Most seventeenth-century language studies assume implicitly or explicitly the existence of a single ideal grammar which reflected or was based on logical categories, the purest manifestation of which was thought to be the grammar of Latin, the prestige language of international learning and the everyday language of instruction in practically all secondary and higher schools' (Hanzeli, p.33), but that

Most of the grammars from the twelfth to the fifteenth century were highly speculative in nature and tended to superimpose the patterns of Latin as known in those days, upon all the other languages. This was by no means due to the grammarians' ignorance of the difference between individual languages, but rather to their striving for the *essentialia*, for the one truth that must be manifest in every language, as it was believed to be manifest in anything the human mind might encompass

(Hanzeli, p.32)

Williams was not merely searching for an ideal truth hidden in Massachusetts, but was using the form of his language text to achieve certain aims.

⁵⁸ Lepore, Jill, "Dead Men Tell No Tales: John Sassamon and the Fatal Consequences of Literacy" in *American Quarterly* 46.4 (1994) 479-512, p.488

A Key into the Language of America

Williams, having also been educated at grammar school, would also have been aware of the Latin textbook form as a potential model; that he chose not to use it is an additional proof that Eliot did not blindly choose the only form he believed was available to him.⁵⁹

Most critics have judged *A Key into the Language of America* to be more unique and innovative than the *Indian Grammar Begun*, and Williams did construct his text in a more complex manner, allowing him to simultaneously record useful phrases, describe the society and culture of the Narragansett Indians, and satirize his enemies in the colonies. However, what critics have previously failed to realise is that Williams based his text on an alternative European template for language texts; books teaching contemporary European vernaculars, what we today would call modern languages. Although the use of the dialogue form for teaching goes back to Augustine, its adoption for the teaching of modern languages was a relatively new development in language teaching in England in the period; Kelly notes that 'from the mid seventeenth century [...] bilingual vocabularies became a normal aid in grammars and readers. Usually they were arranged according to semantic fields or centers of interest, probably because alphabetical indexes are not such effective learning tools as vocabulary arranged according to subject' (pp.25, 35).

These texts were written in an entirely different style to the classical grammars. Rather than breaking the language down into its component parts, and then fitting the grammar into increasingly complex units, vernacular textbooks emphasised pronunciation and idiomatic phrases; they were based on spoken, rather than written, communication (Kelly, pp.33,39). Many did contain some explanation of grammar, but it was generally included as a short explanatory section rather than defining the structure of the text. In one French language text, entitled *The French Garden*, there are 21 pages covering pronunciation and only 17 dedicated to the whole of the remainder of French grammar.⁶⁰

Title pages of French grammars printed at the time frequently promise to improve pronunciation: 'attaining the French tongue as the witts, or gentlemen of the French Academy, speak and pronounce it'; 'the true and most perfect way of pronouncing of the French tongue'; 'teaching in a very short tyme, by a most easie way, to pronounce French naturally, to reade it perfectly, to write it truly, and to speake it accordingly'.⁶¹ Conversely, as the historian of linguistics Hanzeli notes, Latin grammars did not discuss pronunciation of the language, even though it was spoken constantly in schools and

⁵⁹ It is interesting that he called his language text a 'Key' in this respect, because Kelly notes that in the teaching Latin and Greek in the period, a mnemonic device was used whereby the declension systems were imagined as bunches of keys to be ticked off as the student listed the forms of the verb or noun. As far as I know, none of the many interpretations of Williams' use of the word 'key' in his title (Schweitzer, for example, describes it in terms of the Keys of Heaven) has picked up on this. If true, it is interesting that he used such a reference despite not using classical grammatical structures in the *Key*. Louis G. Kelly, *25 Centuries of Language Teaching 500BC – 1969: An Inquiry into the Science, Art and Development of Language Teaching Methodology 500 BC – 1969* (Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1976), pp.44-5

⁶⁰ Pierre Erondelle, *The French Garden: for English ladyes and gentlewomen to walke in* (London, 1605)

⁶¹ Jacques Abbadie, *The New French Grammar* (Oxford, 1676); Claudius Hollyband, *The French Schoolemaister* (London, 1573); G.D.L.M.N., *The French Alphabet* (London, 1592)

universities, including Harvard. For those thinking about Latin, the written was paramount even if it was also used by the learned as a spoken language (Hanzeli, p.38).

This emphasis on teaching students to speak a living language, rather than only learning its grammar, is also presumably behind the tendency of these texts to structure themselves around dialogues. The full title of the text previously mentioned is *The French Garden: for English ladyes and gentlewomen to walke in. Being an instruction for the attayning vnto the knowledge of the French tongue: wherein for the practise thereof, are framed thirteene dialogues in French and English, concerning diuers matters from the rising in the morning till bed-time*. Each dialogue is presented bilingually, with facing pages in English and French, as in the *Key*. Far from being isolated coincidences, this practice of using bilingual dialogues was so common that when Jacques Abbadie wrote a grammar-based French textbook in 1676, he felt the need to explain to his readers that

I hold a Grammar imperfect without some good dialogues, but I judge also to give You enough of them in those many examples which accompany my rules remarques particles and gallicisms; and I am so farr from being asham'd of this new method of not having them alone, that I suppose there's more reason for my approbation that I have order'd them otherwise, for doubtless they are more profitable when they are found apply'd to those rules they explain and thus facilitate, then when they are apart on discourses upon trifles.⁶²

This method of presenting linguistic information, though it varied more between texts than the classical grammars, is clearly related to the structure Williams chose for the *Key*. Like the vernacular textbooks, he divides his writing into thematic chapters rather than grammatical units, and gives the reader lists of useful phrases in facing columns of Narragansett and English. He also echoes the vernacular textbooks by arranging these in what he refers to as an 'Implicite Dialogue', so that the phrases follow on from each other in a loose conversation (*Key*, "Directions for the Use of the Language"). So, for example:

Asco wequássin	
Asco wequassunnúmmis	<i>Good morrow.</i>
Askuttaaquompsin?	<i>Hou doe you?</i>
Asnpaumpmaûntam	<i>I am very well.</i>
Taubot paumpmaûntaman	<i>I am glad you are well.</i>
Cowaúnckamish	<i>My service to you.</i>

(*Key*, p.2)

⁶² Jacques Abbadie, *The New French Grammar* (Oxford, 1676)

The text works as a double dialogue, the English mirroring the Narragansett; and in fact, this was a deliberate choice by Williams. Other text in the period, including some by Eliot and Pierson, tend to use parallel rather than interlinear translations; Williams's method is a new one, which was becoming more popular for modern language texts in the period (Kelly, p.144). Williams's choice of a dialogic structure, which is the form of writing which approaches closest to speech, and his careful instructions on converting the written words back into speech – 'because the Life of all Language is in the Pronuntiation, I have been at the paines and charges to Cause the Accents, Tones or sounds to be affixed, (which some understand, according to the *Greeke* Language, Acutes, Graves, Circumflexes)' – both emphasise his attempt to capture an oral language which had never been recorded in writing in an appropriate manner, and directly recall the European model on which they must be based (Williams, "Directions for the Use of the Language").⁶³

In fact, there is one text – *The French Littelton*, by Claudius Hollyband – which is so similar to Williams' *Key* that there is little doubt that Williams drew ideas and influence from the modern language texts of his day, which he must have come across as a language teacher before he left for America. This is also constructed as dialogues in familiar situations, in French and English columns of text which can be read vertically as well as horizontally, and the similarities to Williams' style in the *Key* can be observed:

	{shameful		{honteux,
he is	{wanton	il est	{mignard,
	{wicked		{mauvais,
	{a lyer, stubborn to father and		{menteur, desobaissant à père
mother: correct all these faults, and I		et mère: corrigez toutes cès fautes, et	
will recompence you: hold,		je vous recompenseré: tenez,	
		{je vous avanceré le kartier:	
{I will pay you the quarter beforehand		{je vous payeré le kartier avant la main.	
		(Hollyband, pp.16-7)	

The provision of several different phrases in French for one in English is a similar technique to those Williams uses in the *Key*, where he frequently gives several Narragansett alternatives for one English phrase, as in the first phrase of the extract above. Also similar is the tendency of both Hollyband and Williams to base their dialogues on narratives, going beyond the needs of providing themed phrases to create situations, such as a child being taken to a new teacher by a stern (and pleasantly generous) parent, or, in Williams' *Key*, a battle, or a journey.⁶⁴

⁶³ Gustafson, p.33-9, argues that Williams understood the importance of being able to convert written words into oral when communicating with the Native Americans, unlike most of the other colonists and in particular Eliot.

⁶⁴ Williams' tendency to create narrative situations is discussed by Castillo, pp.60-8

I do not mean to suggest that Williams based the *Key* on Hollyband's text, or even that he had necessarily read it. However, it would appear to be certain that he had familiarity with similar texts teaching modern European languages, particularly since he had taught them himself, notably instructing Cromwell in Dutch on one of his visits to England. He also expressed strongly-held views about the best way to teach languages, which sum up entirely the difference between the classical grammars and the vernacular textbooks: 'Grammar rules began to be esteemed a tyranny. I taught... as we teach our children English, by words, phrases, and constant talk.'⁶⁵

In suggesting that Williams chose a form which was closely connected to the idea of practical teaching of modern languages in the period, I to some extent disagree with the many critics who insist on seeing the *Key* as a primarily political, rather than linguistic, text. Many critics argue that the *Key* was never intended to be used as a language text, but only a vehicle for Williams' observations, to give him a reputation as an expert in Algonquian language and culture when he returned to London, and to increase his political capital in his attempts to get a charter for Rhode Island (Scanlan, pp.123-154). David Murray, for example, connects the *Key*'s status as a language text to other works by explorers that included short vocabularies, arguing that 'since not one reader in a thousand, then or now, can make anything of the Indian words, or fit them into any framework, they really operate as a guarantee, a *sign* of knowledge and of authority which guarantees the observations' (Murray, 'Key', p.240) While I agree that Williams made use of his expert knowledge to gain influence and friends for the new colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in England, I disagree that he never intended the *Key* to be seen as a language text. On the contrary, he was using what he regarded to be the efficient new methods of language teaching to provide a phrasebook which might be used by traders or others travelling to New England, as well as anyone merely curious about the Indians. It is easy, with hindsight, to see the future of New England as being one where the speaking of English dominated; but in 1643, the balance of power had not yet shifted decisively to the colonists, and the idea of traders and travellers wanting to learn some Narragansett phrases before visiting the colonies would not have seemed implausible. Apart from any other considerations, the fact that – as some critics object – very few readers would have already understood the language is besides the point in a text which aims at teaching it to those who do not have linguistic knowledge. And not only this, but it is as a language text that Williams is able to use the *Key* so effectively to achieve his aims.

However, although Williams undoubtedly came into contact with the modern language texts which provided him with the model for the structure of the *Key*, he must also have been fluent in Latin, since he had been to university. Conversely, while Eliot may have come into more contact with Latin than vernacular European languages, he would probably have been aware of their format from the publication of Williams' *Key*, which was well-known in the 1640s, even if he had never come into

⁶⁵ 1654 letter from Williams to John Winthrop, Jr., quoted in Larzer Ziff, *Puritanism in America: New Culture in a New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p.100

contact with a French textbook. All of which confirms that when Eliot and Williams each considered what structure to use for their language texts, they had motives and considerations beyond the simple exigencies of the easiest way of teaching students the language; and this can be used to demonstrate that they expected these forms to appeal in different ways to different audiences.

Colonial Identities

It has been established, therefore, that Eliot and Williams both chose structures for their texts which would associate the Native American languages they were presenting to their readers with European language traditions; and that we are aware of some of their aims in doing so from their writings. With this knowledge, we can look at the specific associations they were using in these texts; discuss how they hoped to appeal to different audiences; and analyse the subtle subtexts of each form. By doing so, I hope to throw new light on the texts by demonstrating how they were creating and displaying identities for themselves, their subjects, and their audiences through the different linguistic formats they chose for their texts.

In order to do this, I am going to examine the ways that their texts are related to three of the most important forms of identity in the colonies in the period. Settlers living in the colony regarded themselves, I would argue, as belonging to multiple groups which helped to define different aspects of their identities; these different identities could reinforce each other, or exist in tension with each other, depending on the individual concerned. Scanlan has used this idea of the possibility of multiple allegiances fruitfully in his work *Colonial Writing and the New World*; he discusses how Williams and Eliot attempted to detach the concept of Puritanism from automatic association with English national identity, so that they could threaten the English or the English colonists with the possibility of being faced with Native American groups whose identification with Protestantism was greater than their own (Scanlan, pp.123-154 and pp.155-186). It is the way that such connections or tensions between different forms of identity are demonstrated in the *Key* and the *Indian Grammar Begun* which I wish to demonstrate in the rest of this chapter.

Specifically, I will examine three key forms of identity which had particular impact in the colonies: religion, social position, and nationality. The first and last of these are assumed to have related to audiences in England and the colonies as a fairly general category, with some variation, whereas social position represented much more of a range of difference even within the colonies – as witness Winthrop's famous *Arbella* sermon, which emphasised the need to maintain social distinctions in the new settlements.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ John Winthrop, 'A Model of Christian Charity', reprinted in Perry Miller ed., *The American Puritans: Their Prose and Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956) pp.79-84

Social Position

In looking at Williams' and Eliot's texts, it is necessary to analyse not only the ways they presented the subjects of their texts, the Narragansett and Massachusetts Indians and their languages; but also the ways they used these books to portray themselves, and to identify the particular audience that they were aimed at. I am going to look first at how they used subtle methods of language presentation to appeal to particular social groups who might support them: the educated male elite who had power over the funding and support of his missionary effort in England for Eliot, and a broader group which included merchants, gentlewomen, and those who could afford private tutors for Williams. This is a particularly interesting topic of investigation, because several critics recently have discussed the relationships between these groups, and particularly the tensions created by the rise of a merchant class in New England.

Williams' text is dedicated only 'To my Deare and Welbeloved *Friends* and *Countrey-men*, in old and new *ENGLAND*', indicating his attempt at a broader appeal which will be explored in a moment (Key, "To the Reader"). Eliot, on the other hand, demonstrates his awareness of his specific audience by dedicating his text 'To the Right Honourable, ROBERT BOYLE Esq; GOVERNOUR: With the rest of the Right Honourable and Christian Corporation For the Propagation of the GOSPEL unto the *INDIANS* in *New England*' (*Indian Grammar Begun*, dedicatory letter).

This organisation had been created by the English parliament in 1649 in order to finance missionary activities in New England, and Eliot and his converts had been the primary movers for its foundation and the principal beneficiaries of its actions; but as a result, Eliot was under pressure, from the Corporation and from critics in England, to prove that his efforts and the money they had raised had not been wasted (Kellaway, p.15). The Corporation had real power over Eliot's funding and support from England, where there was considerably more enthusiasm for his efforts than in the colonies. The publication of the *Indian Grammar Begun* was in itself a visual, official representation of Eliot's missionary efforts, which were necessarily spiritual and hard to measure; that the printing of the *Indian Grammar Begun* was intended largely to satisfy the Corporation and silence his critics is suggested in the dedicatory letter, when he notes that 'you were pleased...to command me (for such an aspect have your so wise and seasonable Motions, to my heart) to compile a *Grammar* of this language' (dedicatory letter).

One influence on Eliot's choice to structure his *Indian Grammar Begun* in the form of a classical grammar was therefore the nature of his primary target audience. Being able to read, write and speak Latin or other classical languages was, in this period, a mark of being a member of an elite social

group. The distinction between learning Latin and learning a modern European language was a particularly significant one, because the two languages were associated with very different social groups in the seventeenth century. Latin was the language of educated men, and although it was no longer the language of the church since the Reformation, it was still associated with the ministry. All those who attended grammar school would have spent significant periods of time learning the grammar of the language. Fluency in written and spoken Latin was an entrance requirement of Oxford and Cambridge, and of Harvard, when it was founded; the original Harvard entry rules stated that

When any Schollar is able to understand Tulli, or suchlike classical Latine Author *extempore*, and make and speake true Latine in Verse and Prose, *suo ut aiunt Murie*; And decline perfectly the Paradigim's [sic] of *Nouns* and *Verbs* in the *Greek* tongue: Let him then and not before be capable of admission into the Colledge.⁶⁷

The expectation was that all university students would be fluent in Latin; further language learning at university meant studying Greek and Hebrew. Lectures were carried out in Latin, and students were even forbidden to speak any other language within the university.⁶⁸ One critic suggests that this demand for fluent Latin and Greek stemmed from Puritan pressure, and that despite their efforts, it was becoming less common in England. Under Puritan control, however, Harvard enforced the rule that Latin had to be spoken much more strictly (Morison, p.84).

Only a small elite of the population would get this level of education, since most children would be more useful to their parents working to bring in money, rather than going through an expensive education. Those who did learn classical languages, however, were usually either members of the gentry or those intended for the ministry, the law, or the practice of medicine. They would therefore become a part of the educated elite of the country, and would be able to identify and communicate with similar elites from other European countries through their shared knowledge of Latin (John Morgan, p.96). To some extent, merchants and diplomats would also use Latin, as a common language which prevented any single vernacular becoming dominant. As Salmon points out, the fact that the textbooks for the professional practice of medicine, theology and law were frequently written in the 'universal language' of Latin even after the Reformation reinforced its position as a high-status language (*Study of Language*, pp.3,36).

In confirmation of this connection between this privileged, Latin-reading group and the audience Eliot and his contemporaries hoped would support their missionary efforts, we can look briefly at a text which I will discuss further in the discussion of the use of language in creating religious identity. *New Englands First Fruits* was published anonymously, but is a work of propaganda, praising both Eliot's

⁶⁷ Anon., *New Englands First Fruits* (London, 1643) p.13 Further references in the text taken from this edition

⁶⁸ Samuel Eliot Morison, *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century* (Harvard University Press, 1936) pp.84, 169

missionary attempts and the first students at Harvard. Tellingly, it assumes its readers to be part of the educated elite who could read Latin, since it prints the reported commencement day speech titles in Latin without any translation, as if this is expected and normal practice (p.20). That this text, which was aimed at the same group of sponsors and potential sponsors as the *Indian Grammar Begun*, also assumes a knowledge of Latin suggests that Eliot would have anticipated that his audience were part of this highly educated elite; by structuring his text in the form of a classical grammar he therefore puts it in a prestigious scholarly frame of association.⁶⁹

In using a classical structure for the *Indian Grammar Begun*, therefore, Eliot contextualised his work in a manner that would resonate and appeal to an educated, male, powerful audience; precisely the demographic which made up the New England Corporation, who he needed to persuade to continue to support his missionary efforts.⁷⁰ The text would both be immediately familiar to them, and would have the appearance of the type of teaching text the patrons of missionaries might expect to see them preparing from, making Eliot's work appear official and practical. It would have had an air of seriousness and study and restricted knowledge, as opposed to the lighter, populist air of Williams' *Key*.

Williams, on the other hand, in structuring the *Key* in the form of a modern European language text, evoked an entirely different set of associations, and directed his text at a different set of readers. Both audiences would have some elements in common, since both must have been able to read to at least a basic level, and to have enough money to buy books. Unlike the classical grammars, however, which were associated with school, university, official education and the establishment, the modern European language texts were aimed at a different social grouping.

An examination of the French texts printed in the period reveals that, in contrast to the Latin grammars, which are all recommended for school use, the modern languages are much more informal and less institutional. They assume private learning, or more often a private tutor; John Morgan records how among the upper classes, tutors were becoming more common to supplement or in addition to official subjects, while Kelly notes that modern languages 'were usually learned in private, either under a tutor or by self-instruction from books' (John Morgan, p.280; Kelly, p.174). Furthermore, while Latin learners are assumed to be schoolboys, many of whom would either progress to the universities, to study the law, or to join the rich and educated social elite, the French texts anticipate a very different audience. Their titles, and the characters in the dialogues, sometimes suggest that they are for the use of boys with tutors, but also very often suggest that they are for women or for men who are learning, often using the text alone, and for practical reasons – holiday or

⁶⁹ Winslow notes, p.36, that Eliot was enthusiastic about founding schools; Roxbury had a Latin school before 1645

⁷⁰ Kellaway argues, pp.17,19, that the members of both the Company and its Restoration successor, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England, were mostly 'prosperous London merchants', with also some physicians and peers after 1660

business abroad, for example.⁷¹ Since the only women with leisure and literacy enough to make use of these would be, as one text suggests, 'gentlewomen', this form is evidently aimed at the higher classes as well as merchants who needed to travel abroad, and boys with parents who considered another European language to be a useful accomplishment. In one way, therefore, this format suggests an audience which is both potentially wider than Eliot's, encompassing as it does merchants and the non-university educated, but which also has connotations of upper-class prestige and respectability.

The connection to merchants who needed to travel abroad is particularly interesting, partly because Williams came of a family of merchants and worked as a trader himself. But it is also significant, because in recent years, there has been increasing critical interest in social tensions in the New England colonies between the ruling authorities and a mercantile faction within colonial society. Historians such as Burnham have seen anxieties appearing in the period about the development of a merchant class, with transatlantic links, reliance on emerging theoretical capitalistic systems and development of a private, hidden self.⁷²

This, then, suggests that rather than just putting his text in a more open and accessible form than the classical grammatical model of the *Indian Grammar Begun*, Williams may have been aiming his text at the same audience as other texts of the same format; those who needed practical rather than theoretical linguistic knowledge, to whom correct pronunciation was more important than the niceties of grammar, who were primarily interested in language in its oral rather than written form, and who were more likely to support the principles of his pro-toleration and disruptive colony than the orthodox authorities. By the time the *Key* was published, during the Civil War period, those who made up such an audience had in many cases become the authorities in England – he taught Cromwell Dutch when he visited England, and he had met many of those who would later become powerful, including John Milton, when working as a chaplain for Sir William Masham at Otes before he emigrated.⁷³

⁷¹ As is demonstrated in their full titles: Claudius Hollyband, *The French Littelton A most easie, perfect and absolute vway to learne the frenche tongue: nevly set forth by Claudius Holliband, teaching in Paules Churchyarde by the signe of the Lucrece. Let the reader peruse the epistle to his ovvne instruction* (London, 1578); Pierre Erondelle, *The French garden: for English ladyes and gentlewomen to walke in: or, A sommer dayes labonr [sic]. Being an instruction for the attayning vnto the knowledge of the French tongue: wherein for the practise thereof, are framed thirteene dialogues in French and English, concerning diuers matters from the rising in the morning till bed-time.* (London, 1621); Claudius Mauger, *The true advancement of the French tongue. Or a new method, and more easie directions for the attaining of it, then ever yct [sic] have been published. Whereunto are added many choise and select dialogues, containing not onely familiar discourses, but most exact instructions for travell, in a most elegant stile and phrase, very useful and necessary for all gentlemen that intend to travell into France. Also a chapter of Anglicismes, wherein those errors which the English usually commit in speaking French, are demonstrated, and corrected* (London, 1653)

⁷² Michelle Burnham, *Folded Selves: Colonial New England Writing in the World System* (University Press of New England, 2007)

⁷³ Ernst, pp.1-12. On the subject of Williams' audience, see Castillo, p.61: 'Clearly, Williams was aware that the value of his commodity increased in direct proportion to his own status as holder of a monopoly, and when his *Key* was printed in London in 1643 it ensured him not only instant notoriety, but also consolidated his standing as an expert on native affairs in influential Puritan circles.'

Religion

Another form of identity which can also be seen to be linked to language in these texts is religious identity. In this period, and particularly during the religious turmoil of the Civil War and Interregnum, religious identity had become more important to Europeans, and more defining of their allegiances and lifestyle, than it had been for hundreds of years; the contrast between Catholic and Protestant, and the differences between Protestant and Puritan, Quaker and Digger, had made choices in each individual's form of worship a matter of conscious decision to a much greater extent than before the Reformation. This awareness of an individual religious identity was particularly high in New England, where many of the colonists had, famously, chosen to migrate due to religious pressure in England; and was hardly lessened in an environment where the Catholic French were trading to the north and Spanish raids on shipping back to England were frequent.

Moreover, the historical situation of Protestantism in this period meant that its adherents were particularly conscious of the role language and translation played in religion. This was due to the stress put on the need to read the Scriptures, the Word of God; the introductory letter to the 1560 Geneva Bible describes 'the knollage and practising of the worde of God' as being 'the light to our paths, the keye of the kingdome of heauen, our comfort in affliction, our shielde and sworde against Satan, the schoole of all wisdom, the glasse wherein we beholde Gods face, the testimonie of his fauour, and the only foode and nourishment of our soules'.⁷⁴ In order to understand these crucial scriptures properly, Protestant authorities were faced with the need both to return to the original Biblical languages, to what the introduction to the Geneva Bible referred to as 'the languages wherein thei were first written by the holy Gost'; but also to translate these words, which they believed were directly inspired by the Holy Spirit, into the vernacular, so that those who did not have the opportunity to learn Biblical languages would still have access to the Word of God.⁷⁵

That they put such importance on these ideas is indicative of two things; the first was the degree of reaction still to the Catholic practices of carrying out services and writing Bibles in a language most of the population did not understand. This had come to symbolise hypocrisy in religious authority for most Protestants, as will be discussed in the chapter on captivity narratives; as the writers of what has come to be known as the *Bay Psalm Book* wrote, 'Now no Protestant doubteth but that all the books of the Scripture shou'd by Gods Ordinance be extant in the mother tongue of each nation, that they

⁷⁴ 1560 Geneva Bible, introductory letter 'to our beloved brethren in the Lord'

⁷⁵ 1560 Geneva Bible, introductory letter to Elizabeth

may be understood of all, hence the Psalmes are to be translated into our English tongue.'⁷⁶ Vernacular scriptures were a crucial mark of Protestant identity.

This suggests one reason that the movement to force Christian Indians to learn English, rather than translating the Bible into their language, came about later in New England than it did in the Catholic Spanish colonies. Pagden notes that '[b]y the end of the seventeenth century, the Castilian crown had introduced legislation to prevent the use of all Indian languages for the purposes of evangelisation, because it was deemed to be impossible, 'even in the most perfect of them... to explain well and with propriety the mysteries of the Holy Catholic Faith.' And in 1727, the Portuguese outlawed the use of Tupi for any purposes whatsoever.'⁷⁷ Greenblatt also notes that Columbus hoped 'that Spanish language will, as it were, carry with it Spanish religion' (Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p.107). While the English colonists finally, after Eliot died and the balance of power in the region had shifted, began to demand that Praying Indians learn to read in English rather than in their own languages, this happened later than in many other colonies, and the Protestant commitment to the idea of vernacular translations could be seen as one reason for this.⁷⁸

The second need for accurate Biblical translation related to identity within Protestantism, and to the contemporary need for a control on the religious experience. The Calvinism which formed the basis of most of the forms of Protestantism exported to the colonies emphasised the importance of discovering an inner feeling of redemption and assurance of God's love. But this internal assurance was a dangerous idea, giving religious power into the hands of the individual; in the wrong hands, it could – and frequently did – become a means for individuals to claim they had been given superior knowledge or authority directly by God. Claims like this attacked mainstream Protestantism, and undermined its confidence in the ability of man to judge whether inner feelings of conversion came from God or the Devil. As a result, the reaction to such claims was often violent and excessive; as for example the banishment of Anne Hutchinson and her followers.⁷⁹

It also meant that Scripture came to be used as a balance to mental conviction. For example, those anxiously seeking a sign from God that they were saved would often speak of messages coming to them; they would then search in the Bible, and if they could find the words there, would take it as a

⁷⁶ Anon. *The Whole Book of Psalms, faithfully translated into English metre* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1640) 'The Preface'

⁷⁷ Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993) p.119; Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p.107

⁷⁸ In this view I am in opposition to Greenblatt and Edward Gray, who both argue that missionaries discouraged their converts from learning European languages in case they lost their powerful positions as mediators and translators; I would argue that although this may have been true to some extent, Eliot at least had a powerful argument in the Protestant emphasis on the vernacular. Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, pp.86-118; Edward Gray, pp.56-84

⁷⁹ Bellin, for example, argues that Hutchinson was seen as dangerous partly because she split the connection between signs and things in her arguments; Joshua David Bellin, "A Little Shall I Say": Translation and Interculturalism in the John Eliot Tracts' in Colin G. Galloway and Neal Salisbury, eds, *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience* (Boston: University of Virginia Press, 2003) p.60

confirmation that they had experienced a true message from God.⁸⁰ This combination of emotional effect underpinned by scriptural evidence can also be seen, in a slightly different form, in New England accounts such as the one which describes how a believer '[i]n her younger years [...] lay under much trouble on spiritual accounts, till it pleased God to make that gracious Scripture to take hold of her heart, 2 Cor. 12 *And he said unto me, my Grace is sufficient for thee.* More than twenty years after I have heard her tell how sweet and comfortable that place was to her.'⁸¹ This use of the Bible often helped to draw a line between more mainstream Puritanism, and the more marginal 'enthusiasts' and 'radicals' such as the Diggers and Quakers.

As all this suggests, the need for accurate Biblical translation was perceived as crucial. Hence the insistence on founding a university in the colonies, to avoid the possibility of leaving 'an illiterate Ministry to the Churches, when our present Ministers shall lie in the Dust.'⁸² Illiterate in this sense meaning unlearned, rather than unable to read at all; since the majority of university-educated students were expected to become ministers, there was a heavy emphasis in university syllabi of the period on studying Biblical languages. Those who founded Harvard, who were able to control the studies of the students as they had not been able to in the non-Puritan dominated English universities, demanded the study of the three Biblical languages – Latin, Greek and Hebrew – as well as theology.⁸³ It was from this pool of university-educated students that missionaries to the Native Americans were intended to be drawn.

These details represent the background to Eliot's and Williams's writing, and illuminate further the choices they made while writing the *Indian Grammar Begun* and the *Key*. We can once again use the contrast between them in order to highlight linguistic features which might not otherwise stand out. Eliot's interest in the Massachusetts language came about only because of his attempts to convert its speakers, and therefore his text is greatly influenced by religious considerations; Williams, as we saw earlier, refused to try to convert his Native American neighbours, although he insisted he could have influenced them if he so chose. One man, then, made a conscious decision to learn the language in order to convert those he would speak to; the other made a conscious decision not to use his knowledge of the language for such a purpose.

Because Eliot's whole contact with the language and its speakers came about through his missionary efforts, from the beginning his aim was to translate new ideas and practices into Massachusetts culture. It should be noted, as well, that he had no models to follow as he attempted this; although

⁸⁰ See for example the highly influential spiritual autobiography of John Bunyan, "Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners", reprinted in John Stachniewski and Anita Pacheco, eds, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners, With Other Spiritual Autobiographies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998; first edition 1666), pp.20-1

⁸¹ Mary White Rowlandson, 'The sovereignty & goodness of God, together, with the faithfulness of his promises displayed; being a narrative of the captivity and restauration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson' (Cambridge, 1682), reprinted in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars 1675-1699* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913) 107-168, p.120

⁸² *First Fruits*, p.12; see also Morgan, Chapter 6 'A Learned Ministry'

⁸³ Hanzeli refers to these as 'the linguistic Big Three' in the period (p.32), while Morgan calls it 'the trilingual ideal' (p.104)

there were other missionary efforts at the time, his was the first attempt to produce a Bible translation for missionary purposes since the early church, as several historians and critics have noted. Not only was it the first complete evangelical Bible in a non-European language, even predating the Irish Bible, but it was the only Indian Bible produced until 1862 (Edward Gray, pp.56-84). And since he had already produced a number of translations into Massachusett, including this ground-breaking Bible, Eliot must have been confident in his intentions for using the Massachusett language when he wrote *The Indian Grammar Begun*.

Unlike Williams, whose *Key* is full of 'briefe *Observations* of the Customs, Manners and Worships' of the Narragansett Indians whose language he was recording, Eliot chose a form to record the Massachusett language which provided only linguistic information.⁸⁴ 'Customs, Manners and Worships' were irrelevant to student missionaries who were learning in order to change the customs, Europeanise the manners and convert the worships of the speakers of the language. The difference is epitomized in the title of the texts; Williams provides a 'key', commenting that 'This *Key*, respects the *Native Language* of it [America], and happily may unlooke some *Rarities* concerning the *Natives* themselves, not yet discovered... A little *Key* may open a *Box*, where lies a *bunch* of *Keyes*' (*Key*, To the Reader") Eliot, on the other hand, gave *The Indian Grammar Begun* the subtitle, 'Or, An Essay to Bring the Indian Language into RULES'. Nor is it only here that he expressed himself this way; he also wrote to Boyle, chairman of the New England Company, who had asked him to write a grammar, promising

to set upon some essay & begining of reducing this languag unto rule; which, in the most common and useful poynts, I doe see, is reducible; though there be corners & anomalies [sic] full of difficulty to be reduced under any stated rule, as your selfe know, better than I, it is in all languages.⁸⁵

It is worth noting, also, that this quotation confirms that Eliot was aware of the places where his 'rule' did not fit, but remained also convinced that it was 'reducible'.

This is a crucial distinction, because it indicates that while Williams thought of the language as a way to discover what existed already in the lives and culture of the Indians he was going to speak to – whether customs, diplomacy or the furs he traded for a living – Eliot thought of the language as a method of introducing European ideas of religion and society.⁸⁶ Significantly, Kathryn Napier Gray

⁸⁴ Schweitzer, pp.197-9, also emphasises that Williams uses the structure of the *Key* allow him to discuss figures of speech and expressions

⁸⁵ John Eliot, Letter to Robert Boyle, in Royal Society Collection of Boyle letters, II, p.153, quoted in Kellaway, p.137

⁸⁶ Interestingly, Kathryn Napier Gray argues that the words used by Eliot to demonstrate the conjugation of nouns and verbs suggest that he was not only trying to force the language into a classical grammatical form, but also to introduce and formalize European ideas of money exchange, trade and ownership into the new language and culture; she points out that he uses examples such as 'to be wise', 'to pay', 'to keep'. Kathryn Napier Gray, *Speech, Text and Performance in John Eliot's Writing* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Glasgow, 2003) p.117

points that the words used by Eliot in the *Indian Grammar Begun* to demonstrate conjugation are often connected with European concepts of money, trade and ownership, such as 'to pay' and 'to keep' (Napier Gray, p.117). As a result of their different aims, Williams used a form which was used in Europe to convey useful social, mercantile and cultural information for traders and travellers visiting other countries; a form which could convey the idiom of a living, spoken language to the reader and help with its pronunciation. Whereas Eliot chose a form which, rather than giving insights into the way the language was spoken, gave the rules which would allow the reader to create his own idioms and customs.

There was an important difference in the forms of communication required by these different aims. Trading would be carried out as an oral transaction with the almost entirely non-literate Native American hunters, demanding fluency in conversation but few written records. For the Puritan colonists of New England, however, genuine conversion to their form of Christianity demanded an ability to read the Bible. Without a vernacular Bible, converts would be reliant on individuals translating, and would be denied direct access to the Word of God. In providing a classical grammar rather than a phrasebook, Eliot was laying the ground for a later translation of the Bible, a project which he himself was able to complete before he died. He was also providing the means for future missionaries to learn to control the language in their turn. This link between missionary work and learning classical grammar is illustrated in the full title of *New Englands First Fruits*, discussed above: *New Englands First Fruits: in respect, first of the {Conversion of some, Conviction of divers, Preparation of sundry} of the Indians. 2. Of the progresse of Learning, in the Colledge at CAMBRIDGE in Massacusetts Bay*. It goes on to suggest that in the future the colonists hope that God will be

stirring up some to shew mercy to the *Indians*, in affording maintenance to some of our godly active young Schollars, there to make it their work to studie their Language converse with them and carry light amongst them, that so the Gospell might be spread into those darke parts of the world.

(pp.23-4)

Eliot's desire to control the language is linked to the Puritan desire to control the culture, and convert it to what they believed to be the true religion; something which Williams, in his work as a trader, felt no need of. But it is also revealing, because it demonstrates that Eliot felt uneasy about his interest in the language of the other, an uneasiness which is echoed in the Eliot Tracts several times. In the first-published tract, *New Englands First Fruits*, the anonymous author records that the good example of the godly English is a great help in making conversions, but hastens to add that 'Yet (mistake us not) we are wont to keep them at such a distance, (knowing they serve the Devill and are led by him) as not to imbolden them too much or trust them too farre; though we do them what good we can' (*First*

Fruits, p.8). This eagerness to both claim and reject a relationship with the Native Americans demonstrates some of the fear of contamination by the non-holy inherent in the Puritan religious beliefs of Eliot and his contemporaries. Williams also subscribed to this belief; but he took it to such an extreme that he found no difference between other Protestants who he believed not to be fully converted, and Native Americans who had never heard of Christianity; both were equally damned as far as he was concerned. As discussed earlier, this was one reason behind his refusal to even try to convert the Indians; and suggests why he is much less concerned than Eliot to distance himself from the Native Americans.

This demonstrates one way in which religious identity was defined against difference; another, which is equally evident in these texts, was the fear of being identified with Protestant radicalism. Williams, with his extreme religious views and famous willingness to allow complete religious toleration in Rhode Island, felt no need to dissociate himself in his text from such sects, although he did refuse to observe their worship (*Key*, pp.127-8). Eliot, however, was keen to emphasise his difference. He was enthusiastic in creating schools and getting funds for education; he wrote that 'worse than Indian ignorance hath blinded their eyes that renounce learning as an enemy to Gospell Ministeries.'⁸⁷ But this desire for education was also a way of positioning himself. The historian John Morgan has argued that mainstream Puritanism always walked a line between a sectarian enthusiasm which rejected learning altogether, and an over-reliance on pagan classical sources, which were regarded as the pinnacle of natural learning, but inferior to enlightened Christian knowledge (pp.62-76). Eliot, with his emphasis on learning, was naturally inclined to favour the study of classical texts; but he also deliberately chooses to identify the Praying Indians with classical learning.

Presenting their language in terms of a classical grammar is one way he achieves this; the connection of this format with the idea of erudition is confirmed by the introduction to a contemporary Greek grammar, which claimed that 'Grammar, let me tell you (in the words of a very great Critick) is the Sacrist, that bears the Key of Knowledge, by whom alone admittance can be had into the Temple of the Muses, and Treasuries of Arts; even whatever can enrich the mind and raise it from the level of a Barbarian and Idiot, to the Dignity of an Intelligence.'⁸⁸ Eliot chose to emphasise this link in his use of classical grammar and in his descriptions of the interest of Native Americans in the natural workings of the world: 'there is need of learning in Ministers who preach to Indians. much more to English men and gracious Christians, for these had sundry philosophicall questions, which some knowledge of the arts must helpe to give an answer to; and without which these would not have beene satisfied' (*Day-Breaking*, p.17). This had the advantage of portraying the converts in terms of virtuous but as yet unenlightened pagans, ready to be converted as soon as the Word is brought to them; but it also reinforces their distance from radical sectarian groups; perhaps suggesting that they were more

⁸⁷ Anon. [Edward Winslow], *The Day-Breaking if not the Sun-Rising of the Gospell* (London, 1647) p.17

⁸⁸ Anon [R Sutton], *A General Examination of the Common Greek Grammar* (London 1689) "The Epistle"

naturally associated in the colonists' minds with antisocial enthusiasm, rather than dignified ignorance, and that Eliot was attempting to change that impression.

All these distinctions between radical and respectable, mission and exchange, are also suggestive of a difference in attitude towards the relationship of language to religious identity in England and its colonies. Eliot, with a position to maintain within colonial society, emphasises his domination of the language he is coming into contact with; Williams, who appealed to friends in England rather than enemies in the colonies, is far less concerned to prove that he is not being influenced. This difference between English and colonial audiences is a theme which I will now take up and discuss in terms of the imagery of colonial identity.

Nationality and Colonialism

The final point I wish to discuss relates to the development of English nationalism and colonialism in the period. In order to understand the background to Eliot's and Williams' writing, it will first be necessary to look at contemporary English ideas about translation and language.

Paula Blank has argued that 'As early as 1414, language was closely associated with national identity; English representatives at the European Council of Constance cited the 'difference of language' as one 'which by divine and human law is the greatest and most authentic mark of a nation and the essence of it.'⁸⁹ That this viewpoint was still current in the seventeenth-century New England colonies is suggested by the controversy over whether the Native Americans might be the descendants of the Lost Tribe of Israel; both Williams and Eliot commented on this theory, and both assume language to be a sign of connection to a particular national group.

Unlike in later periods, this connection of language and national identity was not seen as a social issue, but as a religious one. Protestants of the period believed that the sacred language spoken by Adam before the Fall, in which words corresponded exactly to objects, had been lost through the original Fall and then the division of languages at Babel. God had deliberately chosen to stop languages from corresponding exactly; now there were a multiplicity of words for each object, preventing inhabitants of different countries from understanding each other clearly.⁹⁰ And as a result, rather than seeing languages as developing and changing over time to reflect the culture which used them, an indication of national difference – an idea which developed from the end of the seventeenth

⁸⁹ Paula Blank, *Broken English: Dialects and the Politics of Language in Renaissance Writings* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996) p.1

⁹⁰ Stephen Prickett, *Words and The Word: Language, Poetics and Biblical Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) p.52-4; Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p.82

century onwards – languages were seen as different because they had declined to different degrees from the original divine language.

Edward Gray argues that even until the late eighteenth century attempts to classify languages assumed they were all descended from the Adamic language (Edward Gray, pp.8-27). Not only did early modern linguists see all language as having degenerated from an original, perfect version, but it was theorized by European linguists that the degree to which this had happened was an indication of how far a culture had fallen (Mignolo, pp.39-45). Pagden has discussed how the radical difference of Native American languages from their European counterparts and the high number of different languages and dialects on the American continents were seen by Europeans to be evidence of God's greater displeasure with these peoples (Pagden, pp.117-140), and argued that as a result the struggle over missionary insistence on the legitimacy of using Indian languages for Christian education was a battle over 'the inherent worth of those languages' (pp.118-9).

Eliot at least seems to have believed that direct and faithful translations were achievable, despite the difficulties of translating complex Christian theological concepts into a language with a completely different tradition of spirituality and philosophy. Eliot does seem to have believed that language reflects the national cultural characteristics of its speakers or vice versa. He pauses in the middle of describing the conjugation of verbs in the *Indian Grammar Begun* to comment, in couplet form – something which has no parallel elsewhere in the text – that

It seems their desires are slow, but strong;
Because they be utter'd double-breath'd and long.

(p.25)

And to confirm that this is not an isolated thought to have struck him, he makes a similar comment later, when he explains – possibly with some humour intended? – that part of his method in searching out all the whole potential of Massachusett is linked to his knowledge of what he claims to be the character of its speakers:

In the Roman language there do belong unto their Indefinite mode, gerundive, lofty and vapouring Expressions, also supine, sluggish, dull and sunk-hearted Expressions. And though the Spirit of this People, viz. the vapouring pride of some, and the dull-hearted supinity of others, might dispose them to such words and expressions, yet I cannot find them out.

(p.20)

Unlike many commentators, however, who attacked the inferiority of the Algonquian languages, Eliot does no such thing. Indeed, Edward Gray has suggested that his decision not to try to change the language of his converts, despite attempting to transform every other aspect of their culture and lives, was a deliberate move, proving to himself and demonstrating to critics such as Cotton Mather – who had claimed that the language was so confused that even demons could not understand it – that the language and hence the people were as capable of development into a ‘godly people’ as the English themselves (Edward Gray, pp.8-27). Eliot needed to believe that their language was capable of expressing the ideas of the Bible; to prove that this was possible would be to demonstrate that they were not irredeemable and unconvertible savages, utterly beyond redemption.

Eliot’s use of a classical grammatical structure to present the Massachusett language can be seen as his attempt to demonstrate to his readers that the language, and therefore the ‘national character’ of his converts, is inherently equivalent and comparable to European languages and cultures, and that they are part of the same frame of reference. This is in interesting contrast to his attempts to force his converts to take up European social habits as part of the process of conversion, which will be discussed in depth in the next chapter, and which I will summarize briefly here.

Native American Christians were persuaded by Eliot to live apart from their family and friends who did not convert, and given grants of land to form communities in the European style. These ‘praying towns’ were composed of houses laid out on straight roads, and which Eliot intended to be built of wood, in imitation of European buildings, but which frequently remained traditional wigwams. The converts were also required to adopt European clothes, styles and manner along with their religion. Lists of rules drawn up, and enforced by elected officers under Eliot’s watchful eye, included strictures on hair length and style, religious life, monogamy and most (in)famously, a ban on killing lice between the teeth.⁹¹ These rules were supposedly spontaneously voted in by the converts as part of their desire to adopt European religion and culture; but indications in the text suggest that Eliot and other missionaries were in fact the driving forces behind their framing. For example, when the Natick ‘praying Indians’ were preparing to join in a covenant with God, as a first step towards a church, several of them were involved in a drinking-bout; and Eliot records that in response ‘I advised with Mr Cotton about it, and his Counsaile was to add these words in the beginning...’⁹² This suggests that he assumed that the Native American converts ought to passively accept English recommendations, an attitude which I will discuss in chapter two.

In the light of this desire to force his converts into a recognizably European way of life, Eliot’s determination, as he says in the title of *The Indian Grammar Begun*, to ‘bring the Indian Language

⁹¹ Thomas Shepherd, *The clear sun-shine of the gospel breaking forth upon the Indians in New-England* (London, 1648) pp.4-5

⁹² Henry Whitfield, *Strength out of Weakness* (London, 1652) p.12

into RULES', becomes another facet of his attempt to force his protégés into a European mould.⁹³ By listing its structures and setting out its grammar in a way Europeans could accept as definitive, he demonstrates that he can force the Algonquian grammar into the European mould, and reassures his supporters that he can do the same to the 'savages' he is attempting to convert. This echoes the assertion made by Mignolo, that grammar was a feature of colonisation, something imposed on the conquered (pp.37-9). It is also supported by Kathryn Napier Gray's argument, that Eliot's actions were intended to stop the Praying Indians appearing so exotic, and that one way of achieving this was to put their language within a familiar frame (p.8).

The fact that Eliot did not attempt to force the converts to speak English, as his successors did, suggests that he regarded language as an essential element of identity in a different way to style of clothes, hair length and house construction. For Eliot, language was inherently connected to national identity, while social and cultural manners were more flexible, marks of the stage of civilization that a culture had progressed (or degenerated) to. In order to prove that Native Americans were capable of conversion, that they could retain their separate national status while becoming Christians, he insisted on the Bible being translated into Massachusett, rather than the converts being encouraged to learn English; and created a situation which to a modern observer seems almost paradoxical, simultaneously insisting that the Praying Indians abandon every aspect of their traditional culture and religion, *except* for their language.

In this belief that clothes, behaviour and lifestyle were adaptable, Eliot picks up a common theme in books of the time, which disappears later, of the idea of the progress of cultures. That this was an important idea in the period is suggested by the fact that it also appears in Williams's *Key*. English writers of this period thought of themselves as a culture which had progressed from savagery to civilisation; many of the texts of encounter compare the dress and manners of the Native Americans to the Picts who inhabited Britain hundreds of years earlier. For example, White's illustrations in Harriot's *Briefe and True Report* include pictures of Picts at the end of a series of portraits of Indians, presenting them in a similar light, with the Picts looking wilder, less clothed, and savage.⁹⁴

This is significant, because unlike later racist rhetoric, the earlier colonists saw Indian identity, society and culture as mutable. Although they still placed cultures in a hierarchy with themselves higher and non-European societies, particularly non-Christian societies, lower, they saw this not as an inherent part of identity, or static, but believed it could change. Thus, as Williams puts it,

⁹³ Edward Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel* (London, 1649), p.16

⁹⁴ Andrew Hadfield, 'Bruited Abroad: John White and Thomas Harriot's Colonial Representation of Ancient Britain' in *British Identities and English Renaissance Literature*, eds David J Baker and Willy Maley, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002) 159-177

They have no *Clothes*, *Bookes*, nor *Letters*, and conceive their *Fathers* never had; and therefore they are easily perswaded that the *God* that made *English* men is a greater *God*, because He hath so richly endowed the *English* above *themselves*: But when they heare that about sixteen hundred yeeres agoe, *England* and the *Inhabitants* thereof were like unto *themselves*, and since have received from *God*, *Clothes*, *Bookes* &c. they are greatly affected with a secret hope concerning *themselves*.

(Key, 'To the Reader')

But although both men use the idea that the English progressed in order to present Native American culture in a good light to their audiences, Williams leaves it up to God to give the Indians civilization, with the underlying implication that they will arrive whenever God decides the moment is right. He writes that 'it may please the *Father of Mercies* to spread *civilitie*, (and in his owne most holy season *Christianitie*', before dropping hints throughout the text that the Native Americans may well overtake the English in 'civility' and acceptability to God if the colonists continue to act in the ways of which Williams, and by implication the Lord, disapproves (Key, 'To the Reader'). Eliot, more practically, attempts to bring his converts to what he regards as civilization almost immediately. Interestingly, he avoids the issue of English progression, by making the issue into a spiritual/non-spiritual one in the present, rather a cultural one in the past (Scanlan, pp.64-5):

Another propounded this question after this answer, Whether English men were ever at any time so ignorant of God and Jesus Christ as themselves?

When wee perceived the root and reach of this question, wee gave them this answer, that there are two sorts of English men, some are bad and naught, and live wickedly and loosely (describing them) and these kind of English men wee told them were in a manner as ignorant of Jesus Christ as the *Indians* now are; but there are a second sort of English men, who though for a time they lived wickedly also like other prophane and ignorant English, yet repenting of their sinnes, and seeking after God and Jesus Christ, they are good men now, and now know Christ, and love Christ, and are thankfull for all they have to Christ, and shall at last when they dye, go up to heaven to Christ, and we told them them [sic] all these also were once as ignorant of God and Jesus Christ as the *Indians* are, but by seeking to know him by reading his booke, and hearing his word, and praying to him &c. they now know Jesus Christ, and just so shall the *Indians* know him if they so seeke him also, although at the present they bee extremely ignorant of him.

(*Day-Breaking*, p.5)

Eliot avoids the issue, by making knowledge of God a personal religious experience, as opposed to Williams' interpretation of it as a general cultural issue – although Williams is admittedly answering a more general question.

Furthermore, Eliot uses the distinction he makes between language, which he connects with identity, and mutable culture, which he links with appearance and behaviour, in his descriptions of the relationship between English and Indian. He parallels the Roman invasion of Britain with the English colonization of America through his description of the relationships between their languages. For example, he asserts that 'Because the English is the first, and most attainable Language which the Indians learn, he is a learned man among them, who can Speak, Reade and Write the English Tongue' (*Indian Grammar Begun*, p.1). This claim essentially makes a case for English to be to Algonquian what Latin is to English: the first foreign language learned, and a marker of education and status.

The unstated impression is that as the Romans brought civilisation to the Picts, so the stern but benevolent English bring Christianity and manners to the initially refractory but soon-to-be-grateful Native Americans. Not only does this hint at great results for Eliot's colonization project, since civilization becomes a practical learning process rather than a divine gift, but it puts the English language and people in the very flattering position of successors to Latin and the Roman Empire. Others in the period had made this comparison, particularly during conflicts which tested their claims to have colonised the region for the Indians' own good, and Eliot furthers it through his decision to structure the *Indian Grammar Begun* as a classical grammar.

The importance of the Roman Empire to European concepts of their own history and as a model of the rise and fall of an empire means that it was often used as an interpretative key in English attempts to understand and predict the progress of their own colonies. The critic Kupperman suggests that the Europeans of the period looked to the past for parallels and found them in the contrast between the increasing decadence of ancient Rome and the less sophisticated but physically more powerful German tribes of the period; an edition of the Roman general Tacitus' work describing the difference was translated at the end of the sixteenth century. Kupperman argues that the English colonies were seen as a way to recover this power and vigour; but the suggestion of a dying and decadent homeland being outdone by the 'barbaric' tribes on its periphery is also an interesting suggestion in light of the critical arguments about the ways in which Eliot used descriptions of Praying Indians to suggest that English Christianity was falling behind its potential.⁹⁵

Final confirmation of the importance of the link between language and national identity can be seen by the actions of Eliot's successors. He kept control of attempts to convert the Indians until his death, attempting to protect their spiritual and material interests with the colonial government, but his efforts were undermined by the brutal conflict the settlers called King Philip's War (discussed in detail in chapters four and five). Although Indians fought on both sides of this conflict, and in their role as

⁹⁵ Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2000) pp.16-40

scouts and effective soldiers helped to win it for the colonists, the latter began to suspect all Native Americans to be enemies, demanding that the Praying Indians be moved to what was effectively a concentration camp on Deer Island during the war. This was as much to protect them from lynch mobs as to imprison them, but conditions on the island, without food or shelter, were harsh. The increasing refusal to differentiate between allied and enemy Indians dating from this conflict represents the rise of racial, rather than cultural, judgements; something I will discuss in more detail in chapters four and five.

After the decisive events of King Philip's War, and especially once Eliot had died, his successors began to demand that the Indian converts learned English, or sent their children to do so by living among the English, often as servants (Edward Gray, pp.56-84). Although on the surface this made sense – there had always been problems due to a lack of missionaries, the costs of printing translated texts, and worries that using translation introduced an air of mystery or would not be able to get across complex spiritual ideas which had no directly appropriate vocabulary available in Massachusetts – in effect, this marks the end of English faith in the mutability of cultures and the inherent spiritual worth of Massachusetts identity; instead of trying to reform Indian culture, the English colonists now attempted to eliminate it altogether and make the Indians as English as possible (Edward Gray, p.48; Bellin, p.64, Kellaway, pp.150-7). While Edward Gray argues that this change was due to a growing sense that the Indian language was inferior, I would argue that in fact many of the English and New England observers had always classed Native American languages as inferior to their own language; instead, I see this shift as the result first of Eliot losing influence due to his unpopularity in King Philip's War, and later his death (Edward Gray, pp.56-84). It was Eliot who insisted on using Massachusetts rather than English, and his demand for it can be seen partly as being due to his determination to raise the status of the language he had spent so much time, and gained so much influence as a mediator, in learning.

The fact that the key to later colonial attempts to make the Praying Indians as English as possible was to force them to learn to speak the English language confirms how important language was as a marker of identity. After King Philip's War, increasing racism led to Native Americans being classed as enemies and judged according to their appearance, rather than as being either 'heathen' or 'Christian', as before. It was this racism which both demanded the extinction of Indian culture, and also meant that Native Americans would not be accepted into European-descended cultures anyway; and in this can be seen the seeds of the nineteenth-century boarding schools and their devastating effects on Native American communities. Writers such as Cotton Mather came to link not only language and national identity, but to see both as unable to change or develop; in other words, they began to lay the foundations of a racism that saw the other not only as different, and not only as inferior, but as being unchangeably inferior due to its difference:

Is it very sure, the best thing we can do for our Indians is to Anglicise them in all agreeable Instances; and in that of Language, as well as others. They can scarce retain their Language, without a Tincture of other Salvage Inclinations, which do but ill suit, either with the Honor, or with the design of Christianity.⁹⁶

In this chapter, I have examined the ways in which Williams and Eliot used the different techniques available to them when presenting linguistic information in order to manipulate their audiences' perception of the religious, national and social identities of the texts' authors, subjects and audiences. Having demonstrated the ways in which language was connected to the production of identity, I will now go on in the next two chapters of this thesis to look at two specific examples of how this was the case, both related to the display of religious identity in the period. The first, "Translating Praying Indian Identities", discusses the role of language in the attempts of a group of Massachusetts Indians to be accepted as Christians in the colony, while the second, "Usurping Colonial Narratives", examines the attack on Puritan religious identity made by the Quaker missionaries who began arriving in the colonies in the late 1650s.

⁹⁶ Letter from Commissioners drafted by Cotton Mather, before 1710, Massachusetts Historical Society Collections 6th Series I pp.400-3; quoted in Kellaway, pp.156-7

2. Translating Praying Indian Identities in the 'Eliot Tracts'

'I heard that Word, That it is a shame for a man to wear long hair, and that there was no such custom in the Churches: at first I thought I loved not long hair, but I did, and found it very hard to cut it off.'⁹⁷

These words were spoken by Monequassun, a Native American man who converted to Christianity during the seventeenth century, and they epitomise the difficulties faced by both New England missionaries and Native American would-be Christians as they tried to understand and to influence each other in the period. Monequassun's discovery that an apparently unimportant detail of his appearance actually meant a lot to him demonstrates the ways in which he, like other converts – known as Praying Indians in the period – found themselves torn between two cultures. Similarly, the fact there had been a demand that he cut his hair at all indicates how the missionaries were also struggling to translate their religious ideas across cultures. John Eliot, the best-known Puritan missionary of the time, insisted that 'I finde it absolutely necessary to carry on civility with Religion', and consequently demanded that Praying Indians adopt an English lifestyle before they could be taken seriously as potential converts to Christianity.⁹⁸ Converts such as Monequassun were asked to move to specially-founded Praying Towns, where they were encouraged not only to cut their hair, but to live in an English-style town and adopt European farming practices.

In this chapter and the next, I will build on the argument of the previous chapter by discussing specific ways in which language was used in the formation and display of Puritan religious identity in the seventeenth-century New England colonies. While the next chapter, "Usurping Colonial Narratives", will look at the Quakers who attempted to undermine and replace the colonists' views of their own religious status, this chapter will take the opposite approach. By examining the words recorded about and by the Praying Indians, a group of Native Americans who converted to Christianity from the 1640s onwards, I intend to demonstrate the ways in which language played an important role in the production of Puritan religious identity, and how it was used by those hoping to be accepted into the congregational churches. I will examine both linguistic translation, and also the idea of cultural translation, in order to demonstrate how colonial missionaries both encouraged converts to adopt English cultural traits in order to take on the appearance of Christianity, and also changed their own ideas and techniques in response to Native American culture. Finally, I will examine the words of the Praying Indians themselves, as they were transcribed and recorded by English translators, in order to

⁹⁷ [John] Eliot and [Thomas] Mayhew, *Tears of Repentance: Or, A Further Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New-England* (London, 1653) pp.18-9

⁹⁸ Edward Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel, Amongst the Indians in New England* (London, 1649) p.16

examine how the Praying Indians themselves learnt to use language to persuade the English of their newly Christian identities.

Introduction

Monequassun's reference, above, to having 'heard that Word' suggests that he must have heard the Bible in translation; one of the greatest difficulties in the way of the missionary work was linguistic. Eliot and a group of Native American translators eventually succeeded in providing a version of the Bible in the local Algonquian language, Massachusetts, but this created further difficulties when the Praying Indians were spiritually prepared enough to ask to be accepted as full church members. Monequassun's words, quoted above, were spoken as part of the conversion narrative which was required of all prospective church members, so that the elders and congregation of the church could judge whether they were sincere and spiritually confident enough to participate in communion. In this case, however, he was speaking in Massachusett, which was then translated into English for the benefit of the listeners trying to judge his spiritual state. Furthermore, his words were then carefully transcribed, sent to London, and printed for the benefit of an interested English audience, who were unable to be present and observe him speaking for themselves. Monequassun's words suggest the importance of issues of translation in the New England missions; not only the translation of language, but also of cultural and religious ideas, and of the descriptions of all these things across the physical boundary of the Atlantic. As such, they represent an appropriate introduction to the Eliot Tracts, which I will discuss in this chapter.

The series of eleven texts which have become known as the Eliot Tracts were printed in London between 1643 and 1671, and recount the progress of New England missionary work over that period. Written by a variety of people who participated in or observed the work and its results, the Tracts aim to persuade an English audience that real attempts were being made by the New England colonists to convert the "heathen" in their region. Over the course of the texts, the efforts of Eliot and other missionaries are charted. The first, *New Englands First Fruits*, discusses both the founding of Harvard and some early attempts to preach to the Indians; the series of tracts then goes on to recount how Eliot instructs an interested group, who listen, ask questions, begin to pray, and eventually are persuaded to resettle in the Praying Town of Natick from 1651 onwards.⁹⁹ Later, the *Tracts* report on the translation of the Bible into Massachusetts, and the two occasions on which a group of Praying Indians gave conversion narratives to a group of New England church elders, in the hope that they would be accepted as Christians and allowed to form their own church – an event which is finally reported in 1660.

⁹⁹ Ives Goddard and Kathleen Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusetts* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1998) p.10

As Monequassun's words, quoted above, suggest, this process was often traumatic for the Praying Indians involved. Many were asked to choose between the ties of friends and kin and homes when they relocated to the Praying Towns, and missionaries demanded that they abandon their traditional culture and way of life if they were to be taken seriously as converts. Why this was the case is a question which has divided critics and historians. Why did this group of Native American men and women choose to go through such a traumatic and painful process? And why did the New England missionaries demand that they did so? After all, the French Jesuits in Canada were boasting in the period of their conversion of thousands of Iroquois Indians, a process which was made easier for them because they allowed converts to become Catholics without asking them to become immediately European as well. Why insist on something which caused suffering and reduced the number of successful conversions?

There has also been a fascinating discussion about the motivations of the Native Americans who chose to become Christians. Older interpretations, most recently represented by Alden T. Vaughan in *New England Frontier*, portrayed them as uncomplicated converts who suffered because they were caught between two worlds, despite the benevolent intentions of the missionaries. More recently, critics have tended to divide between those such as Jennings and Neal Salisbury, who portray them as victims of the destructive demands of missionaries, and others who emphasise Indian agency and suggest that converts had a variety of spiritual and natural motivations. James Axtell, Richard Cogley and Lonkhuyzen, and more recently, Kathryn Napier Gray, all argue that the Praying Indians were not victims, but that at least some of them exploited the missionaries, converting as a way of getting the resources to build new economic and social structures in a time of great pressures on traditional Native American societies. Kathryn Napier Gray points out, furthermore, that even if every convert was entirely sincere in their desire to be a Christian, their performances would be interpreted and understood in very different ways by the different audiences of Praying Indians, colonists, and English observers (Napier Gray, pp.72-4).¹⁰⁰

More recently, however, critics such as Hilary Wyss, David Murray, Kristina Bross and Linda Gregerson has argued that we should not be as absolute in our judgements of their motivations and commitment to Christianity as the missionaries of the period were, and accept the possibility that the converts may have been sincere in their religious conversions, rather than always trying to find ways

¹⁰⁰ Alden T. Vaughan, *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians 1620 – 1675* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1965); Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (University of North Carolina Press, 1975, Norton 1976); Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence* (Oxford University Press, 1982); James Axtell, *After Columbus: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), in particular the essays 'Some Thoughts on the Ethnohistory of Missions' (pp.47-57); Richard Cogley, *John Eliot's Mission to the Indians Before King Philip's War* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Harold W. van Lonkhuyzen, 'A Reappraisal of the Praying Indians: Acculturation, Conversion, and Identity at Natick, Massachusetts, 1646-1730' *The New England Quarterly*, vol. 63.3 (1990) 396-428; Kathryn Napier Gray, 'Speech, Text and Performance in John Eliot's Writing' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Glasgow, 2003)

in which they were outwitting the colonists. They argue that we should be aware that although subversion may have been intended in certain Native American words, questions and actions, it is also possible that it is the product of our own reading. Axtell raised the possibility that some converts genuinely believed in a further essay, 'Were Indian Conversions *bona fide*?' Bross and Wyss, in particular, argue that we should not assume that all converts had the same intentions and motivations; Bross notes that 'close reading of the mission tracts reveals both individuals who found in Christianity the means to understand better their colonized position as well as those who never ceased to resist the demands English evangelists placed on them' (p.21). She also defends the practice of reading against the grain, attacked by critics such as Bellin, who warn of the dangers of reading texts that have been used as ethnological source material in the past in this way, and creating a cycle of seeing what you expect (Bellin, pp.53-4); Bross argues that such fears are over-simplistic and risk erasing Indians from the account altogether; rather than abandoning such reading practices, rather, as scholars we need to read warily (pp.25-6).¹⁰¹

This is a fascinating argument, although one which it is difficult to imagine ever being resolved, dealing as it does with hidden motives which it may have been difficult even for the people involved to define exactly to themselves. However, entering this discussion is not my aim in this chapter. Rather than speculating about the motivations behind Native American conversions to Christianity, I will base my arguments on an acceptance that, for whatever reason, a group of Indians decided that they wanted the New England colonists to see them as genuine Christians and sought to become church members. Whether they did this for spiritual, economic, social, or political reasons, or for a mixture of them all, this appears to have been their aim. It was also the aim of John Eliot and the other New England men who were involved in the missionary effort, and who composed the Eliot Tracts.

If this is accepted, then the Eliot Tracts become a rich source of material in the investigation of Puritan religious identity in the seventeenth century, in both England and New England. The ways in which the Praying Indians were presented, in person and through written descriptions, and the ways in which they represented themselves through their appearances, lives, and words, was intended to convince onlookers that they were genuine Christians. Through an analysis of the Tracts, then, I hope to discover more about the construction of religious identity in the period, and the ways in which this involved translation between Native American and English cultures and languages. Furthermore, I hope to show that this process influenced the lives and spirituality not only of the Praying Indians, but also of the missionaries who came into contact with them.

¹⁰¹ Hilary Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity and Native Community in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), particularly chapter one 'Literacy, Captivity and Redemption: The Christian Indians of King Philip's War'; David Murray, *Forked Tongues: Speech, Writing and Representation in North American Indian Texts* (London, Pinter Publishers, 1991), especially chapter 7, 'Dialogues and Dialogics' (pp.126-157); Kristina Bross, *Dry Bones and Indian Sermons: Praying Indians in Colonial America* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004); Linda Gregerson, 'The Commonwealth of the Word: New England, Old England and the Praying Indians', in *British Identities and English Renaissance Literature*, eds David Baker and Willy Maley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 178-193, p.191; Axtell, 'Were Indian Conversions *bona fide*?' in *After Columbus*, pp.100-121

I will begin by looking at the social and religious background of the missionaries, and the demands from both Old and New England which led the missionary effort to develop in the way that it did. I will then go on to look at the different ways in which the Eliot Tracts, read in the light of these ideas, reveal the expectations of English audiences about how religion should show itself in the lives and words of converts, and the ways – both physical and literary – in which the missionary effort in New England attempted to satisfy these expectations. Finally, I will also examine the ways in which the Praying Indians played an active role in this process of cultural translation, both in the ways they reshaped the Christianity they were presented with, and also in their efforts to refashion the way they told the story of their lives, in order to fit the demands of Puritan spiritual narratives.

In all this, although I do not intend to directly approach the question of whether the Praying Indians were sincere Christian converts, duped victims, or clever politicians making use of the prejudices of the missionaries, I am aware that I am writing in the context of such arguments. Questions of Indian agency and of the difficulties of recovering Native American history from European texts will all have a bearing on the issues I am discussing. While I do not attempt to read ‘against the grain’ as such, I hope that by looking at the ways in which Praying Indians developed their own presentations of their experiences, in texts which give us more direct and unmediated access to their words than is usual in colonial writing, I will be able to balance my discussion of New England colonial hopes and intentions with a view into the methods and words of the Praying Indians themselves.

Social and Political Background

The need to demonstrate to English audiences that New England was carrying out successful missionary work was a major driving force behind the creation of the Praying Towns, which grew out of the specific historical circumstances of New England. Even before its arrival in America, the Massachusetts Bay Company had claimed that bringing Christianity to its original inhabitants was one of their main aims. Their official seal depicted a semi-naked Indian standing among trees, pleading ‘come over and help us’. In 1676, Increase Mather was still referring to ‘the professed pious, and a main design of the *Fathers of this Colony*, viz. *To propagate the Gospel and Kingdome of Christ among these Indians*’.¹⁰²

But in reality the colonists made almost no attempt to preach to the Indians living near their new settlements. Until Eliot’s work became successful, the only real efforts that had been made were those of the Mayhew family of Martha’s Vineyard, who far from being an official and government-

¹⁰² Increase Mather, ‘A Brief History of the War’, reprinted in *So Dreadfull A Judgement: Puritan Responses to King Philip’s War 1676-7*, eds. Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press) 55-206, p.82

supported missionaries, attracted very little attention until later in the century. This situation was a source of reproach from the English across the Atlantic, who tended to be far more interested in and sympathetic to the Native Americans than the colonists themselves, and who wanted to know what progress was being made in their conversion to the saving truths of Christianity. Even those within the colonies felt that they were setting a bad example; Bross argues that in the 1640s and 1650s, as the civil war and Interregnum caused the colonists to question whether God really had abandoned England, converting the Indians became a source of new purpose for the colonists (pp.1-27). Furthermore, the lack of conversions was felt to give force to French arguments against Protestantism: Increase Mather wrote that 'It is a great pity then, that we in *New-England*, who do not come behind others in Profession, and Pretences to Religion, should fall short in real endeavours, for the promotion, and propagation of Religion, & Christianity amongst those who have been for ages that are past, *without God, and without Christ, and strangers to the Common-wealth of Israel*' ('Brief History', p.83). Meanwhile, the French in Canada were not only claiming to convert thousands of the Native Americans they encountered, but publishing the immensely popular *Jesuit Relations* to publicise their efforts.

As a result, when an official missionary effort, led by John Eliot, did emerge after October 1646, it was seized on as an answer to criticisms and heavily publicised.¹⁰³ The Eliot Tracts were written to coax money and support from readers and church congregations in England; they are made up of compilations of evidence about the success of the missions, consisting of letters, documents describing the progress of missionary work, accounts by third parties with reports of encouraging conversions, and professions of belief made by the Native American converts, who were known in the period as Praying Indians. Most were collated and printed by the New England Company, a charitable organisation set up by the Long Parliament in England in 1649 to lobby the government for funding and official support to the missionary work, and to publicise it; by 1653 it had raised £4,500.¹⁰⁴ After the Restoration, it was renamed 'the Company for Propagation of the Gospell in new England, and the parts adjacent in America', although it continued to be called the New England Company in England, and 'the Corporation' in the New England colonies (Kellaway, p.50).

This indicates some of the pressure that was on the New England colony and particularly on Eliot and his supporters. Not only were they responsible to God and to their converts, but they were also under great pressure to prove to English audiences that the conversions they were reporting were genuine. And this gives us a way to investigate the construction of religious identity in the period, because through the Eliot Tracts we can see how Eliot and other writers attempted to shape both the lives and the written accounts of the Praying Indians, in order to persuade those observing the missions that the converts were sincere Christians. This means that through an analysis of the events described,

¹⁰³ Ola Elizabeth Winslow, *John Eliot, 'Apostle to the Indians'* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968) p.131

¹⁰⁴ Kellaway, William, *The New England Company 1649 – 1776: Missionary Society to the American Indians* (London: Longmans, 1961) pp.15, 34

and of the literary techniques used in describing them, we can establish what the assumptions of writers and readers were involving the creation and display of religious identity in the period.

Religious Background

Before looking at the evidence presented in the Eliot Tracts, it will first be necessary to discuss a factor which had an enormous influence on the form the missionary effort, and ultimately the Praying Towns, took: the particular form of Christianity which the English colonists had imported into the region, and which the Christian Native Americans were being asked to accept. The Protestantism which was imported into seventeenth-century New England was founded on a fundamental tension between the inner life of the soul and its outer manifestations. Puritans believed that true conversion required what William Bradford referred to as

a twofold calling, the one an inward calling when the Lord moved the heart of man to take that calling upon him and fitted him with gifts for the same; the second was an outward calling which was from the people, when a company of believers are joined together in covenant to walk together in all the ways of God.¹⁰⁵

As this quotation suggests, Puritan Christianity was characterised by two main elements, which were to some extent in conflict with each other; and this was even more so in the case of the Congregational Calvinism which defined the colonists of Massachusetts Bay, where much of the missionary work was carried out. As the name suggests, this religion was Calvinist, which meant that it emphasised the need for a conversion experience and an inner feeling of religious conviction, which could only be given by God, never earned by the deeds of sinful man. However, it is also described as Congregationalism, because its structure was based on groups of believers who formed themselves into churches and elected a minister to lead them.¹⁰⁶ In order to enter one of these groups, applicants had to find some way to persuade a congregation that their outward professions of faith matched their inner experience of redemption.

This double emphasis on Calvinism and Congregationalism led to concerns about the relationship between inner conviction and outer displays of religious feeling. On the one hand, ministers and Puritan writers continually stressed the Calvinist message that, as one contemporary puts it, 'all outward honest[y] and righteousness, without the true knowledge and inward feeling of God, availeth not to eternal life'.¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, this came into direct conflict with the outer, social element of

¹⁰⁵ William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation 1620-1647* (New York: The Modern Library, 1981) p.248

¹⁰⁶ Perry Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630-1650: A Genetic Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933)

¹⁰⁷ Arthur Dent, *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* (London, 1654) p.12

Congregationalism. How were the redeemed to gather together in congregations of the elect, if it was entirely impossible to judge from outward signs who was saved and who was damned?

A huge number of Puritan pamphlets and religious manuals in the period provided answers. Texts such as *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* and *The Practice of Piety* demonstrate the ways that Puritan culture had developed a system of signs, speech patterns and behaviour which individuals could use to express their internal feeling of being one of the elect, or to identify the religious status of others.¹⁰⁸ These texts solemnly warn their readers of the impossibility of earning salvation through good works, but then go on to give lists of 'nine very clear and manifest signs of a man's condemnation' or 'eight infallible notes and tokens of a regenerate mind, which may well be termed the eight signs of Salvation' (Dent, p.19). The ultimate test of these signs was the practice of giving 'conversion narratives' when applying to join some of the separatist churches. The congregation would listen to the new member's account of his spiritual life, and would judge by his manner and language as well as his story whether he seemed to be spiritually awakened. Such books were bestsellers: Stephen Foster notes that Dent's *Plain Man's Pathway* went through twenty-five editions and 38,000 sales in the first forty years of the seventeenth century, while Bayly's *Practice of Piety* notched up 54 editions and 87,000 sales by 1640.¹⁰⁹

Edmund S. Morgan argues in *Visible Saints* that such 'signs of salvation' were not created directly in order to set tests for converts, but in order to help them judge their chances of salvation, and it was due to this that 'the result of their studies was to establish a morphology of conversion, so that a man could check his eternal condition by a set of temporal and recognizable signs.'¹¹⁰ However, it was these culturally shared signs that made the practice of congregationalism possible, by allowing a way to judge the inner state of a convert by external signs, and so to attempt to keep the membership of the churches pure (Morgan, pp.66-7). However, this also created a great fear of hypocrisy, and an keen awareness of the possibility of misreading such signs. Writers pointed out the danger posed by the externally pious man who had no inner conviction, warning that 'some fal from *professed* seeming holynes, to sin & profanenes, who like *blazing* comets did shine *bright* for a time, but after have *set* in a *night* of darknes.'¹¹¹ In the largely Calvinist Congregationalist settlement of Massachusetts Bay, the Antinomian crisis revealed the extent to which the ability to judge others' spiritual states was a source of enormous tension: after Anne Hutchinson claimed that God had given her a special ability to

¹⁰⁸ Lewis Bayly, *The Practice of Pietie Directing a Christian how to walke that he may please God* (London, 1616); W. Clark Gilpin, *The Millenarian Piety of Roger Williams* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979) pp.1-13

¹⁰⁹ Stephen Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture, 1570-1700* (University of North Carolina, 1991) Chapter 2. 'Continuity and Ambiguity: 'The Gospel Doing, 1590-1630'

¹¹⁰ Edmund S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (New York: New York University Press, 1963), p.36

¹¹¹ Thomas Shepard, *The Clear Sun-Shine of the Gospel Breaking Forth Upon the Indians in New-England* (London, 1648) "Epistle to the Reader"

distinguish hypocrites from the saved, the authorities reacted with startling fury, banishing her and disbanding her followers.¹¹²

As this suggests, there were deep-rooted tensions over the relationship of inner belief and its outer appearance built into the religion that Eliot and the mission supporters were preaching; Cecilia Tichi has linked Puritanism to a deep-seated fear of acting and false appearances which would seem to arise from their concerns over hypocrisy.¹¹³ But there were other features which would also have an enormous effect on the progress of the missions. One of them is the nature of these 'signs of Salvation' which were described by the writers of the advice manuals quoted above. These characteristically included not only religious attributes, such as much prayer and a tender conscience, and a delight in going to hear sermons; but they also related to the way you lived your daily life. The convert was expected to work assiduously at his secular calling, while never being ensnared by a love of gain; he would wear modest clothes, bear himself humbly, work industriously at a secular job, and so on.¹¹⁴

All this is entirely understandable in the context of English culture: hard work, humility, the wearing of modest clothing were all strongly connected as signs of moral behaviour in traditional English culture, which would therefore be considered to be religiously appropriate, and encouraged by church leaders.¹¹⁵ The crucial difference in the Calvinist viewpoint, of course, was that these signs were no longer considered to be good in themselves, but only symptomatic of an inner experience of conversion which, it was generally accepted, would spur you on to attempt to behave more morally, because of your new hatred of sin.

Part of the difficulty for the English missionaries and Native American converts, however, lay in the fact that because conversion was considered by the majority of the settlers to be the work of God, it was also believed to be invisible, irresistible – and universal. So that, although in retrospect we can see that the 'signs of Salvation' were firmly rooted in contemporary English culture, for the majority of seventeenth-century believers they were expected to reveal themselves wherever God chose to redeem a sinner. Ann Kibbey argues that the Puritans subordinated their religious ideas to their belief in the absolute rightness of their own social practices; and I would argue, in fact, that they *needed* to keep this belief that such signs were universal, because to suggest otherwise would have been to

¹¹² There are numerous critical arguments about exactly what element of Hutchinson's beliefs and behaviour caused the authorities to treat her as they did. Here I am following Sandra Gustafson's argument in *Eloquence is Power* that it was her claim to have direct access to spiritual truths which ministers could only reach via the Bible which seemed so subversive to the authorities. Sandra Gustafson, *Eloquence is Power: Oratory and Performance in Early America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), pp.19-33

¹¹³ Cecilia Tichi, 'Thespis and the "Carnall hypocrite": A Puritan Motive for Aversion to Drama' in *Early American Literature* 4.2 (1969) 88-103, p.96

¹¹⁴ See, for example, John Cotton, 'Christian Calling' (1641) reprinted in Perry Miller, ed., *The American Puritans: Their Prose and Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956) 171-182

¹¹⁵ Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2003) pp.34-5

question the foundation of their beliefs.¹¹⁶ And when this doctrine was applied to the entirely different traditional morality and social mores of the Algonquin groups Eliot worked with, they become increasingly paradoxical. Massachusetts culture had very different associations between style of clothing and piety to European ideas; furthermore, traditional food production balanced an efficient and low-maintenance form of farming with seasonal hunting, and had therefore never needed to promote intensive labour as a virtue, with most farming being carried out by women.¹¹⁷ In effect, then, the Praying Indians were being required to abandon more than their religion, more even than the external manifestations of their traditional culture; they were also being required to adapt their ways of thinking about and expressing personality, piety and morality.

Not only this, but it laid huge obstacles in the way of Native American converts, because Puritan dogma required that these signs should appear to be displayed unconsciously; the fear of hypocrisy meant that appearing to deliberately adopt the correct external signs would, in itself, be suspect. Presumably, therefore, Eliot could not openly teach his converts to display the subtle signs that English Puritans would find convincing; and unlike English converts, they had not been brought up in an environment where these values, deeply rooted in local Christian tradition, could be unconsciously internalised, or absorbed through reading Puritan texts and sermons.¹¹⁸ As a result, they did not naturally have access to the cultural signifiers by which they could indicate their religious sincerity. Over the half century or so of Eliot's missionary work, however, he and the Praying Indians attempted to either adopt or to adapt these signifiers to their own circumstances, and this process of cultural translation can be traced in The Eliot Tracts. What is more, this interpretation can be used to explain why the Praying Towns developed in the ways that they did; and particularly why Eliot famously insisted that 'I finde it absolutely necessary to carry on civility with Religion' (*Glorious Progress*, p.16).

Linguistic and Cultural Translation

I want to begin my investigation of this process by quoting from an early Tract, *The Day-Breaking, if not the Sun-Rising of the Gospell with the Indians in New England*. This is an account of the start of Eliot's first successful preaching mission in 1646:

We began with prayer, which now was in English, being not so farre acquainted with the *Indian* language as to expresse our hearts herein before God or them, but we hope it will bee done ere long, the *Indians* desiring it that they also might know how to pray; but thus

¹¹⁶ Kibbey, Ann, *The Interpretation of Material Shapes in Puritanism: A Study of Rhetoric, Prejudice, and Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) pp.6-41

¹¹⁷ Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2000) pp.142-173

¹¹⁸ Edmund Morgan, pp.90-1; David D Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1989) p.128

wee began in an unknowne tongue to them, partly to let them know that this dutie in hand was serious and sacred, (for so much some of them understand by what is undertaken at prayer) partly also in regard of our selves, that we might agree together in the same request and heart sorrows for them even in that place where God was never wont to be called upon.¹¹⁹

In this passage we can identify many of the ideas and problems which shaped the New England missions and the accounts in the Eliot Tracts, both in what is stated here, and in what is left unsaid. The difficulties of translation for missionary purposes between the Massachusetts language and English were much discussed in the period; a parallel problem suggested by this quotation, however, was never openly addressed by seventeenth-century observers. The modern historian James Axtell has hinted at this problem in his discussion of the problems facing missionaries, who had to “translate ancient history and mixed precepts of the bible for people who knew nothing of Israel, books, sheep, churches, or even candles, much less Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory”.¹²⁰ The issue raised here is something which could be termed *cultural* translation; the need not just to translate the words of the prayer, but the very concept of ‘prayer’ itself – something which the writer notes that only ‘some’ of their initial audience understood the significance of.

This passage illustrates both the faith of the missionaries that this cultural translation would be relatively simple, and the difficulties they encountered as soon as they put their faith to the test. For example, the writer reports that they began their preaching session with prayer in English. This in itself is interesting, and they are clearly defensive about it, because their explanations multiply – they don’t know enough of the Indian language yet, they want to agree together in their request to God, and (most interestingly), in order to ‘let them know that this dutie was in hand was serious and sacred, (for so much some of them understand what is undertaken at prayer)’.

They had good reason to be defensive, given that one of Protestantism’s greatest complaints against Catholic practice had always been that services were carried out in Latin, a language few of the participants understood; John Williams, a New England minister who was taken captive and imprisoned in Canada later in the century, complained after witnessing a Catholic Mass that it was ‘a great confusion instead of gospel order [...] saying Mass in a tongue unknown to the savages’.¹²¹ Eliot’s most famous work would be the translation of the Bible into Massachusetts, in order to make it available to all the Praying Indian converts. But that makes the third of their excuses for their actions intriguing, because they emphasise the fact that English is ‘an unknowne tongue’ to the Indians, and

¹¹⁹ Anon. [Edward Winslow], *The Day-Breaking, if not the sun-rising of the Gospell with the Indians in New-England* (London, 1647) pp.1-2

¹²⁰ James Axtell, *Natives and Newcomers: The Cultural Origins of North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) p.75

¹²¹ John Williams, *The Redeemed Captive*, reprinted in Alden T. Vaughan and Edward W. Clark (eds) *Puritans Among the Indians: Accounts of Captivity and Redemption, 1676-1724* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986) p.185

yet go on to connect this incomprehensible performance with the idea of it being interpreted by the Indians watching in the way the English want them to interpret it, as a 'serious and sacred' action.

Although this statement is open to several possible interpretations, I think it is most plausible to take it as meaning that a sincere prayer in English will be a more convincing performance than a halting prayer in Massachusetts; another plausible interpretation being that they will recognise it as a religious action more readily because they have observed such English actions take place before, in a situation where they understood the serious religious context. The critic Kristina Bross interprets this scene as one of 'primal eloquence', echoing the texts of early American encounter, and argues that the writers see themselves as being understood in much the same way as the early explorers assumed they could achieve linguistic transparency (Bross, pp.52-83). I will discuss the idea of effortless communication in more detail in my final chapter; here, I interpret the passage slightly differently to Bross, instead seeing the writer of *The Day Breaking* to be demonstrating a faith in the ease with which body language, gesture and expressions can be translated between different cultures. Such an assumption can be seen by modern readers to be extremely problematic: the historian James Axtell, for example, notes in his discussion of intercultural communication between Native Americans and Europeans that 'since body languages, no less than verbal ones, are culturally variable, the opportunities on both sides for ambiguity and misinterpretation were legion' (Axtell, *Natives*, p.41).

This Tract also contains hints of the failure of this understanding; as the session progresses, Eliot invites his listeners to ask him questions about Christianity, and one of them questions 'whether Jesus Christ did understand, or God did understand *Indian* prayers.' This suggests that rather than interpreting the English prayer in the way intended, he drew the more obvious conclusion, that the English God had to be addressed in the English language: he argued God 'had bin used to heere *English* man pray and so could well enough understand them, but *Indian* language in prayer hee thought hee was not acquainted with it, but was a stranger to it, and therefore could not understand them' (*Day-Breaking*, p.4).

This, however, is a conclusion which is never drawn by the writers of the *Tracts*. Instead, the letters, witness statements and accounts printed in them continually emphasise the importance and trust they place in their ability to understand and translate behavioural and emotional, rather than linguistic, actions by the Native American converts. Edward Jackson reported in another Tract in the series, *The Clear Sun-Shine of the Gospel*, that 'as I came back by one of the *Wigwams*, the man of that *Wigwam* was at prayer; at which I was so much affected, that I could not but stand under a tree within hearing, though I could not understand but little of his words' (p.14) Similarly, when a group of Praying Indians were giving statements about their spiritual state, Eliot reported that '[Waban's] Confession being not so satisfactory as was desired, Mr. *Wilson* testified, that he spake these latter expressions with tears'

(*Tears of Repentance*, p.7). In other words, his inability to argue his case verbally was mitigated by his display of appropriate emotion. The writers of the Eliot Tracts seem in general to have had enormous faith in the universality of gesture and emotion, the ease of cultural translation as compared to linguistic. With hindsight and the understanding that the study of psychology has brought to us, we can see the problems inherent in this viewpoint; however, the seventeenth-century missionaries and writers in New England would not, or could not, and clearly did not expect their audience to.

The English Template of the Praying Towns

The Praying Towns, in effect, were the result of the conjunction of English beliefs in the transparency of behaviour between cultures, and the Calvinist assumption discussed earlier, of the universality of the experience of God's spirit being manifested in the 'signs of Salvation'. In arguing this, I am in disagreement with critics such as Bozeman and Bross, who argue that Eliot saw the Praying Indians as a *tabula rasa* on which to establish a biblically-based society.¹²² Instead, I suggest that in interpreting Eliot's actions as an attempt to fit the Christian Indians to the English 'signs of Salvation', we can make sense of Eliot's statement that 'I finde it absolutely necessary to carry on civility with Religion' (*Glorious Progress*, p.16), and to understand why he demanded that Native American converts adopt a European lifestyle along with their new religion, in a way that the Jesuits, for example, did not feel was necessary. Historians of English Puritanism tend not to notice this Puritan concern with material signs of salvation, arguing like Kibbey that they regarded conversion as a change in the way the convert thought, rather than of their social behaviour (Kibbey, pp.7-8).

However, several historians and critics of New England Puritanism have discussed this problem, notably Kristina Bross, who rightly notes that the presence of the Praying Towns helped address the problem of Indian hypocrisy, without explaining why this was or examining the ambiguities of such a proof. I agree, however, with her emphasis on the fact that it is difficult to separate the spiritual and the material in the case of the Praying Indians, who were competing for land and resources at the time (Bross, p.41). Bross argues that the use of physical appearance was the equivalent sign for Praying Indians that the conversion narrative was for converts: 'Although mission writers recognised that outward signs were no sure indication of an Indian's salvation, the physical manifestation of grace in converts was taken as seriously in Indian conversations as it was in New England's tradition of public confession for church membership or in the debates over sanctification during the Antinomian Controversy' (p.23). I would argue that although this taking on of English clothes and lifestyles was meant to be a sign of the Praying Indians' change of spiritual state, this was not an adaptation of the signs by which Protestants and particularly Puritans judged each other, but an inability to carry out

¹²² Bross, p.13; Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *To Live Ancient Lives: The Primitivist Dimension in Puritanism* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988) p.269

cultural translation; an inability, in other words, to recognise that it was possible to have changed your inner state without also changing the outer to suit English ideas.

Catholicism did not have the same anxious searching after signs to judge a convert's spiritual state as Calvinist Congregationalism, because as an organisation it was willing to accept most converts who claimed to sincerely desire membership. But Eliot would have known that his English audience – and presumably, his New England observers – could never accept anyone as a redeemed Saint, no matter how sincere a believer they claimed to be, unless they lived the outward physical life of one. Which meant taking up European work practices, living habits, dress and hairstyle.

This mindset, which Daniel Richter refers to as that of “missionaries unable to separate Christianity from European culture” is demonstrated many times in the missionary texts.¹²³ One tract, entitled *Tears of Repentance*, records the sceptical comment of an opponent that

if there be any work of Grace amongst them, it would surely bring forth, and be accompanied with the Reformation of their disordered lives, as in other things, so in their neglect of Labor, and their living in idleness and pleasure.

(“To the Christian Reader”)

And these criticisms clearly had an effect. Over the course of the *Tracts*, it is noticeable that the nature of the evidence brought forward to support claims about the number and sincerity of converts changes. In the early tracts, the tone of those describing the converts is anxious; the texts shower the reader with examples of the ‘Praying Indian’s’ piety and respect for Christian learning, ‘their gracious attention to the Word, the affections and mournings of some of them under it [...] and such like appearances of a great change upon them’ (*Clear Sun-Shine*, p.11). But later, the *Tracts’* writers attempt to counter the still continuing scepticism through different forms of evidence. Once the converts had relocated into a praying town at Natick, it was the material evidence of their work building bridges and planting orchards which was recounted as proof of their reformation; the tract that reported scepticism went on to claim triumphantly that:

since the Word of God came amongst them [...] they have more applied themselves unto Labor than formerly: for evidence whereof, appeal m[a]y be made to [...] the Grounds that they have fenced in, and clawed and broken up, and especially their capacious Meeting-house.

(*Tears of Repentance*, “To the Christian Reader”)

¹²³ Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2001) p.124

This demonstrates how Eliot and those involved in the missionary work refused to translate their cultural expectations; instead of attempting to see parallel traditions of piety and morality in Native American culture, they instead forced converts to reshape their lives so that they could be forced to fit directly into an English frame of reference. In this, I am making the opposite argument to Bross, who argues that such elements were reported because the English could not report on anything else due to a lack of language skills; she claims that such proofs were replaced with spiritual evidence as quickly as possible as it emerged, in order to counter claims of shallow materialism (Bross, p.41). In fact, I argue, such material evidence of the Praying Indians' development could not be reported immediately, and when they do emerge are reported with more confidence than more tenuous details of attitude and spoken belief. This is not to claim that the Puritans privileged material piety above spiritual, but merely to emphasise the Puritan fear of hypocrisy discussed earlier, which meant that writers could place more certainty in their observation of outward moral actions by the Praying Indians than in their reports of what the converts *said* they believed.

Ironically, the English belief in the transparency and universality of culture was responsible for some incredibly traumatic change for the Praying Indians, whose narratives – which will be discussed at the end of the chapter – attest to the emotional pain they experienced when pressurised to cut off their hair, leave their families and communities for the Praying Towns, and take on the backbreaking work of European-style manual labour.

Eyewitnessing and Eavesdropping

This adoption of elements of European culture by the Praying Indians allowed the readers of the Eliot Tracts to judge them using a familiar frame of reference; but this tangible physical evidence was still remote from them geographically – something which can be seen to have been more of a problem when congregational Puritan practices are taken into account. Each person had to be accepted into a specific church, rather than being given blanket entry into the organisation as a whole. As a result, entry into the church was often judged by the immediate witness of existing members, who were able to weigh up and examine the facial expressions and manner of those giving conversion narratives, in addition to their words. Patricia Caldwell emphasises the importance of the congregation being able to observe the manner and appearance of the speaker as well as their words, arguing that there was an inherent distrust of the ease with which words could mask hypocrisy; although at the same time, somewhat contradictorily, language and expressiveness were felt to be gifts of God and a sign of divine approval.¹²⁴ The contemporary importance of such external signs in judging inner spirituality is

¹²⁴ Caldwell, Patricia, *The Puritan Conversion Narrative: The Beginnings of American Expression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp.97, 138

suggested by the methods taken by the writers of the Eliot Tracts to convince their readers that the Praying Indians were genuine converts to Christianity.

Writers in the *Tracts* repeatedly insist that their accounts are immediate enough to be trustworthy, making frequent references to ‘eye and eare witnesses’ or ‘faithfull witnesses’. At the same time, New England critics of the project have their claims to local knowledge scornfully dismissed, as not being true eye-witnesses despite their location on the right side of the Atlantic: ‘having lived remote from the work done, and either not affecting the instruments therein imployed, or not going to the places of their Exercise, that they might see and heare the gracious operations of the Spirit of God amongst them, [they] may easily misreport the proceedings of Gods goodnesse therein.’¹²⁵ This insistence on eyewitness is a recurring theme in these texts, as Kristina Bross notes, and in Early American texts of encounter, as Anthony Pagden argues; in accordance with the classical rhetorical trope of autopsy, an eyewitness was considered to have a privileged understanding of events, and hence an authority to speak about them and judge them denied to those who only knew about them at second hand.¹²⁶

Eyewitness authority can also be linked to the importance of letters to the early American colonies; Round argues that the settlements were reliant on written correspondence to mediate the flow of goods, services, people and politics, and as a result letters became printable and marketable commodities.¹²⁷ In this new culture in which letters were highly valued and crucial to colonial survival, ‘writers, more and more often ‘strangers’ to their metropolitan readers, were left to seek out rhetorical methods of earning trust. [...] From their culturally “peripheral” position, colonial correspondents exploited emerging letter writing conventions that echoed the gestures of gentility and truth telling as a replacement for traditional or “customary” modes of interaction’ (Round, p.428). Round and Napier Gray both argue that the Eliot Tracts insist on eyewitness testimonies and the truth-telling discourse associated with their inclusion of letters, in an attempt to create trust in their depictions of Praying Indian conversions (Round, p.264; Napier Gray, pp.34-7). Furthermore, the majority of the members of the New England Company – and later its successor, the Company for the Propagation of the Gospel – were merchants, who would have relied on letters in order to conduct much of their overseas business and so been accustomed to making judgements about the reliability of their contents (Kellaway, pp.17, 19, 50).

If close observation of both conversion narratives and the daily lives of the Praying Indians was useful evidence of godliness, the Eliot Tracts also demonstrate how such associations could be taken a step

¹²⁵ *Strength out of weaknesse; or a glorious manifestation of the further progresse of the Gospel among the Indians in New-England* (London, 1652) pp.1-2; *Clear Sun-Shine*, p.12

¹²⁶ Bross, p.39; Anthony Pagden, *European Encounter with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (Yale UP, New Haven and London, 1993) chapter two, ‘The Autoptic Imagination’ (51-87) p.83

¹²⁷ Philip H. Round, ‘Neither Here nor There: Transatlantic Epistolarity in Early America’ in *A Companion to the Literatures of Colonial America*, eds Castillo and Schweitzer (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005) 426-445, pp.427-8

further. Kamensky argues in her important study of the spoken word in the New England colonies, *Governing the Tongue*, that

To a significant degree, the vaunted 'watchfulness' of New England towns was really 'hearffulness': an ethos of keeping one's ears peeled for loose talk. Proficient eavesdropping was one of the skills that made and unmade reputations in early New England. In this face-to-face world, stories about one's neighbours constituted a vital form of social currency.¹²⁸

But if Puritan society was, to a certain extent, policed and founded on the interest of neighbours in observing and judging their neighbours' words and actions, the Eliot Tracts also reveal how the writers promoting the missionary effort began to develop new techniques of observation, in an attempt to persuade readers that the Praying Indians were not only putting on a show for colonial and English audiences. In particular, they go out of their way to report encouraging behaviour by converts which they were not intended to see, or saw secretly – eliminating the suggestion that the Indians were Praying only for the convenience of the English.

One manifestation of this was the desire to eavesdrop on converts, to see whether they continued to pray and to keep the Sabbath when there were no colonial observers present to reward them for their piety. Writers in the Tracts show little embarrassment at admitting they have spied on Praying Indian families. Edward Jackson, for example, reported (as discussed above) that after observing one of Eliot's preaching sessions, 'as I came back by one of the *Wigwams*, the man of that *Wigwam* was at prayer; at which I was so much affected, that I could not but stand under a tree within hearing, though I could not understand but little of his words' (*Clear Sun-Shine*, p.14). Similarly, John Wilson told a correspondent in a letter printed in *Strength Out of Weakness* that 'Mr Eliots brother [...] had purposely sometimes In the darke walked the Round, as it were alone, and found them in their severall Families as devout in prayer, &c. as if there had been any present to observe' (pp.19-20).

Emotion

At other points in the *Tracts* we can observe how the writers of these accounts try to demonstrate the Praying Indians' sincerity by exploiting differences between the cultural values of non-Christian Native groups and European Christians, which they would have expected to be well-known to their

¹²⁸ Jane Kamensky, *Governing the Tongue: The Politics of Speech in Early New England* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.12

readers.¹²⁹ One example of this is the frequent reporting of emotional reactions in Native Americans listening to Eliot's preaching. In one typical example, the writer reported:

it may not be amisse to take notice of the mighty power of the word which visibly appeared especially in one of them, who in hearing these things about sinne and hell, and Jesus Christ, powred out many teares and shewed much affliction without affectation of being seene, desiring rather to conceal his grief which (as was gathered from his carriage) the Lord forced from him.

(*Day-Breaking*, p.13)

For the observers and readers of this scene, this response to preaching would have been an entirely appropriate one – sermons provoking tears and terror were a standard feature of Puritan accounts of conversion, and 'heart breakings' were regarded as an important sign of conviction of sin, so that it was possible for them to utter the almost oxymoronic sentence, 'wee parted greatly rejoicing for such sorrowing' (*Day-Breaking*, p.14).

On the other hand, the writers and editors of the *Tracts* were also aware that English audiences had been fascinated for decades by accounts of Indian culture. Writers could have assumed that a large part of the audience of the *Tracts* would have read accounts of the stoicism and physical fortitude of Native American men; William Wood, for example, had reported in *New Englands Prospect* that 'for their hardinesse it may procure admiration, no ordinary paines making them so much as alter their countenance.'¹³⁰ As a result, they are presenting their readers with an apparently contradictory image – an Indian man in tears, breaking down as he hears about sin, hell and Christ. The writers thus emphasise similarity through a demonstration of difference, juxtaposing exotic details – some of the texts have footnotes explaining words such as 'wigwam' – with a reaction which would be everyday in an English convert.¹³¹ To emphasise the unusual and unexpected nature of such a reaction, they insist that rather than glorying in or expecting his tears, the man tries 'rather to conceal his grief'. He is portrayed as a passive recipient of the emotion, which the writer comments that '(as was gathered from his carriage [i.e. his behaviour and appearance]) the Lord forced from him'. This, of course, was the expected course of events in a Calvinist conversion – sinful man was believed not to be capable of choosing to be affected by preaching, or turning to God, but rather such emotions, beliefs and thoughts had to come directly from God to those he chose, for his own inscrutable reasons, to save.

¹²⁹ By this I do not mean to negate my earlier statement that the colonists were unable to appreciate that Native American society had parallel systems of morality and appropriate social behaviour to their own; there is a distinction between being able to recognise that social and cultural values exist, and accepting that they are as valid as your own, and I argue that the missionary workers in New England were never able to take that second step. It is doubtful whether the vast majority of Jesuits in Canada did either; they were willing to allow converts to adapt to Catholicism gradually, but this does not imply that they did so for reasons of cultural relativity.

¹³⁰ William Wood, *New Englands Prospect* (London, 1634) p.75

¹³¹ For example, *Day-Breaking*, p.1

In short, then, the writer is presenting the reader with an image of an Indian man reacting to preaching exactly as a godly Englishman would be expected to, and doing this not as a planned display, but in spite of himself. This serves a double purpose in the text. In the first place, it confirmed English belief in the universality of their own cultural values, suggesting that there *did* exist a universal religious culture which did not need to be translated, but emerged in exactly the same form whenever God redeemed a sinner, however 'exotic' the culture of the convert involved. But it also simultaneously provides a powerful piece of evidence to suggest that the conversions reported are genuine: if it is accepted that a man has reacted in a way utterly alien to his own culture and which is so unexpected by him that it even makes him ashamed of his own reaction (and audiences would have wanted to accept this, because of the confirmation it gave to their own prejudices), they would also have to accept that it must be a true conversion.

It is not unexpected that Puritan writers in this period would expect their audience to notice and 'read' such encouraging signs for themselves, picking up on even subtle hints and signs. Reading deep significance into events and words was a typically Puritan concept; the focus on interpreting the Bible and the practice of typology, as well as the searching of everyday life to pick up on clues about your own spiritual state, all encouraged the development of such reading skills. And the fact that this image of a Native American man attempting to hide his emotion is frequently used in the Eliot Tracts suggests that writers found it to be a successful way to persuade their readers that God's spirit was at work among the Praying Indians.

Translation

A similar effect is achieved in some of Eliot's contribution to the *Tracts*, which record the original Massachusetts words of the Praying Indians, directly followed by appropriate English translations. These bilingual quotations exploit translation difficulties between English and Massachusetts, which elsewhere were a source of enormous problems in the attempt to form a Native American church, but which here are used to emphasise the orthodox nature of the Native American response to Christianity.

For example, when the prayers composed by Christian Native Americans are reported in the tract *The Day-Breaking*, they are rendered bilingually, first in Massachusetts and then in English:

Amanauthen Jehovah Schaffen wetagh

Take away Lord my stony heart.

Another

Cheehesom Jehovah kukohogkow

Wash Lord my soule.

(*Day-Breaking*, p.23)

Like the assertion that the Massachusetts man's emotion was not a hypocritical show, but that he desired 'rather to conceal' it, this translation of texts into English gives the audience the impression of observing something which was not intended to be heard by them, and which is therefore less likely to have been staged for their benefit. And just as the reader suddenly recognised a familiar emotion coming from the apparently exotic Indian man, these English translations would have been deeply familiar to the reader, as conventional Protestant prayers. Demands that God cleanse the sinner's soul, and references to a 'stony heart' (originally a reference to Ezekiel), were clichés of Puritan discourse. Their effect is heightened by being reported immediately after the Massachusetts originals, which would have been incomprehensible and exotic to most of the Tracts' readers. If only the translations had been provided, the effect would have been mundane; but given the text in two languages, the contrast between alien, 'savage' appearance and familiar Christianity could not be more marked, creating a kind of shock of the familiar for the reader, and forcing a recategorization of those speaking the prayers from 'exotic savage' to 'conventional Puritan'.

This is particularly significant in the light of Pagden's argument that 'Movement [...] was always, and inevitably, traumatic. To protect themselves from the "shock of the new", most Europeans carried about with them a cluster of notions, categories, suppositions about what it was they would encounter out there' (p.5). Pagden also argues that such attempts to reclassify the people and places they encountered in the New World was not only an expression of their desire for familiarity, but a symptom of the fact that 'Most Europeans [...] belonged to intellectual cultures which were convinced that everything in the world conformed to a pre-ordained set of laws – the law of nature (the *ius naturae*) – and could be made explicable in terms of that law' (Pagden, p.10). Although Pagden is discussing the reactions of the early European explorers here, the reaction he describes can be seen to be related to this practice of printing Indian prayers in the original Massachusetts, and then in an English translation. The threateningly unfamiliar is suddenly shown to fit conveniently within an English Protestant frame, a revelation which readers would not only have regarded as an encouraging sign of the Praying Indians' spiritual progress, but also as reflecting a manifestation of God's universal presence.

The writer who recorded the prayers insists that 'he that preacheth to them [ie Eliot] professeth hee never yet used any of their words in his prayers, from whom otherwise it might bee thought that they had learnd them by rote' (*Day-Breaking*, p.23). The fact that such an explicit denial was necessary suggests how incredibly appropriate the words were considered, and how unexpected they were in this context. In a post-Babel world, in which words were believed no longer to correspond exactly to

their referents, and perfect translation was impossible, readers might be expected to take such a close correspondence as a sign of the manifestation of the divine spirit.¹³² This is supported by Edward Gray's argument, in *New World Babel*, that early modern Protestants saw Babel as a curse which could be undone, and the church reunited, through the power of the universal language of prayer.¹³³

Elsewhere, Eliot specifically expresses such ideas in his introductory letter 'To The Reader' in the tract *Tears of Repentance*:

I see evident demonstrations that Gods Spirit by his word hath taught them, because their expressions, both in Prayer, and in the Confessions which I have now published, are far more, and more full, and spiritual, and various, than ever I was able to express unto them; in that poor broken manner of Teaching which I have used among them.

("To the Reader")

Here, Eliot specifically suggests that readers can accept the Praying Indians' ability to express themselves as evidence of God's presence. As with the descriptions of unexpected emotion in converts, the welcome suggestion that the Puritans have the right idea about universal manifestations of God's power acts a powerful incentive for English readers to accept the evidence presented to them, that 'there is some work of God upon their [the Praying Indians'] hearts'.¹³⁴ In a related argument about the Tracts, Bross argues that Shepard, writing such an account, tries to make Eliot's linguistic inadequacies a sign of God's interest – the fact that he was successful despite his lack of linguistic ability demonstrates how only divine power could have converted the Indians (Bross, p.56).

Questions

Thus far, the writers of the Tracts can be seen to be trying to convince their audience of the genuineness of Praying Indian conversions either by shaping Native American lives to fit within an English cultural framework, or by assuming the existence of a universal underlying culture in which the spirit of God will eventually show itself in a familiar form anyway. However, it is also possible to trace the ways in which the writers of these accounts also began to react to the specific circumstances of New England; and also how their portrayals of the conversion process were

¹³² Joshua David Bellin, "A Little Shall I Say": Translation and Interculturalism in the John Eliot Tracts' in Colin G Galloway and Neal Salisbury, eds, *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience* (Boston: University of Virginia Press, 2003) Publications of The Colonial Society of Massachusetts Vol 71 (pp.52-83) pp.57-60

¹³³ Edward G. Gray, *New World Babel: Languages and Nations in Early America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p.21

¹³⁴ Henry Whitfield, *The light appearing more and more towards the perfect day. Or, a farther discovery of the present state of the Indians in New-England, concerning the progresse of the Gospel amongst them* (London, 1651) p.41

influenced by the Christian Native Americans themselves, who did not listen passively to preaching, but responded in accordance with their own interests and priorities. For the rest of this chapter, then, I will look at ways in which the English “signs of salvation” were reshaped and developed in the Tracts, beginning with the missionary analysis of Praying Indian questions as a measure of spiritual progress, and going on to focus on the ways in which Praying Indians learnt over time to recognise and manipulate the ‘signs of salvation’ for themselves in their conversion narratives.

The technique of analysing the questions asked by Praying Indians after Eliot’s sermons first appears in an early tract, *The Day Breaking if not the Sun Rising With the Indians in New England*:

We then desired to know of them, if they would propound any question to us for more cleare understanding of what was delivered; whereupon severall of them propounded presently severall questions, (far different from what some other *Indians* under *Kitchomakia* in the like meeting some six weeks before had done, viz. 1. What was the cause of Thunder. 2. Of the Ebbing and Flowing of the Sea. 3. Of the Wind) but the questions (which wee thinke some speciall wisdom of God directed these unto) (which these propounded) were in number six.

(p.3)

The questions which the writer was so pleased with were all directed towards gaining more knowledge of Christianity: how the listeners might come to know Christ, how to pray, the meaning of repentance, and other related questions. It is clear that for the writers of this section of *The Day Breaking*, these questions were not seen as neutral, but were categorised as right or wrong.¹³⁵ Other tracts suggest the same: one, *The Clear Sun-Shine of the Gospel breaking forth upon the Indians in Nevv-England*, reports an example of the wrong type of question.

We had this year a malignant drunken *Indian*, that (to cast some reproach, as wee feared, upon this way) boldly propounded this question, *Mr. Eliot* (said he) *Who made Sack? who made Sack?* but he was soon snib’d by the other *Indians*, calling it a *Papoose* question.

(*Clear Sun-Shine*, p.14)

This distinction made by the writer between more and less satisfactory questions suggests that this use of questions is not a simple teaching aid, a variation on the catechism used in the religious instruction of English children, but also a test of whether the listeners are in the ‘correct’ frame of mind; a way of judging whether the questioners are genuinely, as one of the writers of the Tracts put

¹³⁵ Linda Gregerson also argues that ‘The questions [...] are offered as a form of surety, interim report, and prospectus to an audience of interested investors, the Christian faithful of Parliamentary England.’ (p.182)

it, 'framing their hearts to an earnest enquire after the knowledge of God' (*Clear Sun-Shine*, title page). In arguing this I am in agreement with Bross, who points out that only ten percent of the questions reported have answers specified, and most are presented without context, demonstrating that it was the questions themselves which the writers of the Tracts regarded as important, as an external sign of the inner spiritual development of the Indian converts (Bross, pp.96-7).

However, I disagree with Bross's assertion that the mention in the first quotation, above, of the previous unsatisfactory questions is 'a curiously extended parenthetical aside [which] may point to a real discomfort with this new religious ritual' (p.93). Instead, I interpret this long parenthesis as being intended to highlight the significance of these questions to an English audience, and to remind them that they are not so self-evident as a reader brought up knowing the catechism might assume. Unlike the earlier interest in natural phenomena, which are associated with natural human curiosity about the material world, the questions reported in *The Day Breaking* suggest that Eliot's listeners are interested in learning more about religion: a possible indication that their souls are in the early stages of being awoken by the Holy Spirit. The writer's comment about 'some speciall wisdome of God' directing these questions to them suggests that these lists of questions, like the depictions of hidden emotion and unexpectedly familiar prayers described above, are intended to provide evidence to the reader that the universal power of God was being unexpectedly revealed among the Praying Indians.

Eliot thus creates a new form of the 'signs of salvation', an equivalent of the signs of redemption and damnation in mainstream Puritan texts, but one which is more appropriate to those who started utterly ignorant of Christianity, rather than those who are merely among the unawoken of the national church. The presence or absence of God can be judged from whether the right kind of questions are asked, in the same way that in England it might be judged from whether people enjoyed hearing sermons. Bross has persuasively argued that this practice of printing questions was deliberately developed as a distinctive form in which the Praying Indians' spiritual progress could be tracked until they were ready to give conversion narratives. Significantly, she also notes that it was a form which was open to easy editing and control by the writers of the Tracts (Bross, pp.84-111).

This possibility of editing by missionaries and observers might at first glance seem to negate any question of cultural adaptation in this practice. It is the English who judge whether the questions are the 'right' ones, and it is assumed to be God's universal power which is prompting the Indians in what they ask. However, there are hints here that Eliot is beginning to try to create some form of cultural translation, or equivalence. By reporting the questions, he is not directly trying to replicate an English experience of conversion, because those who were going through a conversion experience in England or its colonies would already be nominally Christian, and therefore would not need to ask such basic questions. So Eliot is creating something closer to the idea of cultural translation: he takes an English Puritan idea – the desire to know more about the soul's spiritual state and the knowledge

of God being a sign of redemption – but adapts it to the different circumstances of Native American converts. Eliot uses this method of recounting questions asked by the Praying Indians frequently in his letters, and they are often printed in the Tracts, suggesting that they must have been successfully accepted as signs of redemption by the Tracts' English readers.

Several critics, including Bross (p.86) and Bellin have similarly argued that this practice of recording questions is a form of adaptation, which combines certain elements of the English Puritan "signs of salvation" with elements of the traditional oral culture of the Native Americans who were adopting Christianity. Bellin in particular argues that translation in the Eliot Tracts is an act of multiple authorship, with utterances attributable to both and neither of Eliot and the Praying Indians (pp.73-4). These questions, then, can be seen as a form of cultural "third space" or "middle ground", where both Eliot and the Christian Native Americans were able to adapt and develop their cultural identities to each other's expectations, in order to convince both their peers and those observing them from the other side of the cultural divide that they were sincere. This idea of a 'middle ground', 'third space' or 'contact zone' is one which has been explored by several historians and critics in recent years; each has looked at different ways in which such a space allows for interactions which are to some extent on neutral ground.¹³⁶ While I would argue that the Praying Towns were not neutral ground, they did offer a space in which a culture developed that was neither English nor traditionally Massachusetts, but contained elements of both – although with a strong emphasis towards English Protestantism which it would be wrong to underestimate, given the effect it had on the lives of the Praying Indians.

Observation and Surveillance

What all the sources discussed so far have in common is their point of view; although all the efforts of the text are focused on trying to perceive the truth of the Praying Indians' spiritual state, the perspective is always of an outside observer looking in, an eavesdropper who tries to catch hypocrites out, an astute eye and ear witness who tries to judge sincerity by emotional reaction and tone of voice. Partly, this is a feature of Puritan writing in general: the wariness of hypocrisy, the desire for fellowship with other sincere believers, the knowledge that only God can truly see another's soul, is a feature of much Puritan writing.

However, I would argue that the methods used by the writers of the Eliot Tracts to try to identify true religious feeling in Native American converts take such observation a step further, from observation into surveillance; from listening and watching to spying and eavesdropping. The reporting of emotions, words and reactions that the Praying Indians did not intend to be observed allows the

¹³⁶ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes region, 1650 – 1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Pratt, Mary Louise, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992) p.6

writers of the *Tracts* to reassure their audiences that these are genuinely hopeful converts, not materialistic hypocrites conning English donors out of money and goods; but at the same time, this gaze keeps the Native American Christians in the position of Other, a separate and alien group who may be studied and observed, but who cannot be trusted to speak for themselves. The emphasis in the *Tracts* on spying rather than observing, eavesdropping rather than talking directly, has a similar effect. The writers refuse to acknowledge the Praying Indians as being Christians in the same way as they accept that other colonists are Christians. Instead they maintain an image of them as Other, even while praising their spiritual progress.

To some extent, eavesdropping was also a feature of Puritan society in general, as Kamensky persuasively argues in *Governing the Tongue* (p.12). However, I would argue that although the fact that eavesdropping was a feature of life in the early New England colonies may have allowed these writers to admit to spying on converts with less embarrassment, the methods of observation and analysis discussed here are applied to the group, rather than at an individual level. It doesn't matter which family were overheard praying, which Native American man was moved to tears; it is only important that it was an Indian who was observed secretly praying or crying. Colonial gossip, on the other hand, gained its power from the fact of its applicability to a particular individual. Furthermore, unlike colonial gossip, surveillance in the *Tracts* goes only in one direction; the Praying Indians are an object of secret observation in a way that the missionaries and colonists never are. Similarly, although critics such as Bross have argued that the insistence of the Praying Indians on asking challenging spiritual questions demonstrates their refusal to lapse into passivity in the conversion process (Bross, pp.85, 94-5), the fact that few answers to these questions are printed gives the reader of the *Tracts* the impression of observing only the Native American half of the exchange; rather than reporting what must, in reality, have been a debate, the *Tracts* present the Indian questions only as exhibits, to be judged.

For the rest of the chapter, I want to move away from these representations of the Praying Indians as a homogenous and alien Other which are such a significant feature of English writing in the *Tracts*, and instead examine the ways in which these Christian Native Americans actively shaped their own representations, both in person in the colonies, and in England through the records of their words printed in the Eliot *Tracts*.

As I argued in the introduction to this chapter, there is ample evidence to suggest that whatever their motivations for doing so, many of the Praying Indians wanted to be taken seriously and accepted as Christians by the English. They faced enormous difficulties in their search for acceptance. Perhaps one of the most important obstacles which they had to overcome was the fact that, unlike English converts, they had not been brought up in a Christian tradition, and did not have access to the Puritan texts and sermons which surrounded converts in England. As a result, they did not have access to the

information which guided converts' behaviour and subtly educated them in how to speak, behave and act. The Tracts, however, demonstrate that the Praying Indians gradually learnt for themselves how to shape their efforts to fit Puritan expectations. They accepted Eliot's insistence that they could not become church members and receive communion unless they also accepted a European lifestyle:

That until they were come up unto Civil Cohabitation, Government, and Labor, which a fixed condition of life will put them upon, they were not so capable to be betrusted with that Treasure of Christ, lest they should scandalize the same, and make it of none effect, because if any should through temptation fall under Censure, he could easily run away (as some have done), and be tempted so to do, unless he were fixed in an Habitation, and had some means of livelihood to lose, and leave behind him: such Reasons have satisfied them hitherto.

(*Tears of Repentance*, p.1)

They adapted to all the strange rules and demands made on them, cutting off their hair, sometimes leaving their homes and families, adapting to the back-breaking style of European farming. And within the parameters of Eliot's teaching about how to become good protestant Christians, the Praying Indians were also able to adapt their newly-adopted religion to suit their own cultural needs. For example, they acquired their nickname of 'Praying Indians' because they surprised missionaries by the unusual emphasis they put on prayer. Eliot noted that

Their frequent phrase of Praying to God, is not to be understood of that Ordinance and Duty of Prayer only, but of all Religion... it is observable, because it seemeth to me, the Lord will make them a Praying people: and indeed, there is a great Spirit of Prayer powred out upon them, to my wonderment

(*Tears of Repentance*, 'To the Reader')

Another observer noted, with puzzled approval, that they had adapted funeral practices from the New England norm: 'now although the English do not usually meet in companies to pray together after such sad occasions, yet it seems God stirrd up their hearts thus to do' (*Clear Sun-Shine*, p.36). The ethnohistorian James Axtell argues that such changes went beyond personal preferences, into an attempt to keep cultural continuity with their previous practices; 'the Indians of the north-eastern woodland were remarkably persistent in honouring and burying their dead according to their own cultural standards, most of which predated the arrival of the Christians from Europe.'¹³⁷ If this is the case, it was not picked up on by the writers of the Tracts, who demand that '[t]hey shall not disguise themselves in their mournings, as formerly, nor shall they keep a great noyse by howling' but do not

¹³⁷ James Axtell, 'Last Rights: The acculturation of Native Funerals in Colonial North America', reprinted in *The European and the Indian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981) 110-128, p.113

mention attempts to subvert those laws (*Clear Sun-Shine*, p.5). Hints such as the mention of their different funeral habits, however, suggest that to some extent the community of Native American Christians were introducing new elements to the worship which Eliot was teaching them, and putting a different emphasis on other elements which were already there. Scholars such as Richter and Napier Gray have argued, as a result, that the Praying Indians were preserving certain features of their traditional culture – oral prayers and invocations, a community response to grief through spiritual ceremony after a burial – in a form which the English could accept as a part of Christian worship (Richter, p.128; Napier Gray, p.58).

Conversion Narratives: Structure and Expectations

The evidence in the *Tracts* of the ways that the Praying Indians actively learned both to adapt to the demands of their newly-adopted religion, and to shape Christianity to fit their own needs, can be seen most clearly in the transcriptions of Praying Indian conversion narratives printed in 1653 and 1660. The accounts recorded in *Tears of Repentance* in 1653 and *A Further Account of the Progress of the Gospel among the Indians in New England* in 1660 offer a uniquely individual, and relatively unmediated, view of the spiritual self-fashioning of a group of Christian Native Americans over a period of seven years.¹³⁸ Through analysis of the changes and developments between the two sets of narratives, we can observe how Native American converts learnt to present themselves to English Christians in such a way as to maximise their chances of being accepted into church membership. Over the seven years, despite not coming from a culture imbued with Christian ideas and values, Massachusetts converts succeeded in learning to recognise and manipulate the Protestant 'signs of salvation' for themselves.

Unlike other accounts, which record a colonial perspective or offer highly mediated and edited renderings of Native voices, these sources make a unique attempt to transcribe the words of the Praying Indians involved as closely and as accurately as possible. As discussed above, when a potential church member stood up before the congregation to give a narrative of their spiritual development, it was a moment of intense scrutiny, in which they knew that not only their words, but also their tone, manner, phrasing and appearance, would be weighed up for evidence of sincerity and hypocrisy; Caldwell argues that they needed to speak in a convincing tone, for example (p.66). In attempting to provide an account for an audience across the Atlantic, Eliot shows himself anxious to convince readers that although they cannot be eyewitnesses to the visual clues of manner and tone (although at times the text does note the emotion displayed by a speaker), they are at least reading the most accurate transcription possible of their words. The narratives had to be translated into

¹³⁸ John Eliot, *A Further Account of the Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England* (London, 1660)

English, and the texts carefully document the process of translation, name the translators involved and contain sworn statements that the transcribed statements are accurate and representative.

This attempt to convey the experience of listening to Praying Indian conversion narratives as accurately and faithfully as possible was intended by the organisers of the meetings and the writers of the accounts in the Tracts to help distant readers evaluate whether the speakers were displaying hopeful signs of conversion or not. Patricia Caldwell has noted that 'In the end, the value and efficacy of a profession are not in the speech nor even in the speaker but in the joint action of speaker and audience – that is, in the words being spoken, heard and believed' (p.107). In other words, the participation of the audience and their belief or rejection of the narrative of the convert's life were an integral part of the process of giving a conversion narrative. For this reason, they provide an extremely useful resource for us, because they come as close as we are likely to get to the way Praying Indians chose to represent their own religious experience. Because Eliot was not the only authority, nor the only translator present, it is the Native voices and narratives which are recorded, rather than his rewriting of them to fit English expectations. And I agree with Daniel Richter's argument that the fact that they were genuinely personal narratives, as opposed to highly coached presentations, is suggested by the fact that they are all clearly the products of different personalities, experiences and speaking abilities (Richter, p.117). Eliot notes that Nishohkou 'when he had made this Confession... was much abashed, for he is a bashful man; many things he spoke that I missed' (*Tears of Repentance*, p.33). The schoolmaster, Monequassun, on the other hand, is so articulate and full of spiritual quotation that he is asked to stop speaking before he has finished, because those listening to his statement in a foreign language are getting bored and restless. Some confessions are full of vivid narrative, some are logically constructed, others ramble and mix doctrine and spiritual progress almost at random.

There are limitations to how close we can come to the speakers through these texts, of course. As numerous critics note, something is always lost when oral speech is converted into written words. 'The filter of writing', as Kamensky refers to it (p.11), takes away from us the knowledge of the manner in which words were spoken, the small clues that give away the emotional content of spoken words (Richter, p.118). Furthermore, these conversion narratives are mostly translated, so the precise choice of words of the speakers is lost to us; they are full of Biblical echoes and language as well as the exact quotations cited, but whether this is a feature of the translator's language or the original speakers' is now difficult to say. As Richter argues,

"different idioms" were no minor issue. The complex discursive universe of symbols and associations in which words are embedded ensures that translation from any language into another – even by the most skilled interpreter – can never be straightforward.

(pp.117-8)

However, it seems reasonable to accept the general structure of what the converts chose to speak about, in what order, and what conclusions they drew from their raw materials as demonstrating the way the speakers chose to present themselves to their listeners.

As well as being fascinating because of their unusually close and unmediated access to what specific Native Americans chose to say about their experience of converting to Christianity, these conversion narratives are vitally important because they represent the moment which everyone involved would have regarded as the culmination of the process of conversion. All the other signs – choosing to adopt European cultural mores and work habits, wearing ‘civilised’ clothes, cutting their hair – enabled the converts to be taken seriously enough to be considered at all for church membership; but the true test of whether they were ready to become part of a congregation and receive the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper were their conversion narratives.

This practice of giving conversion narratives was a feature of some of the Protestant churches in both England and New England. Numerous critics have discussed the ways in which such narratives developed, and what defined them. Patricia Caldwell summarizes the definition of the conversion narrative as having three major elements:

(1) [a] relation before the entire congregation of (2) a genuine experience of conversion (not doctrinal ‘knowledge’ or ‘belief’) which (3) was required of all who would join the church.

(p.45)

Edmund S. Morgan’s analysis of the stages of conversion displayed in these narratives is also useful.¹³⁹ He defines the conversion narrative as ‘a narration, perhaps fifteen minutes in length, of the way in which God’s saving grace came to him [a convert]. Questions might be put to him about this experience by any member in order that all might be certain of its genuineness’ (p.89). Morgan argues that it was non-separating Congregationalists, like those who colonized Massachusetts Bay, who were most concerned about entry restrictions and keeping the membership of each congregation ‘pure’; he believes that the practice of conversion narratives actually began in Massachusetts and later spread to the other colonies and back across the Atlantic (pp.64-112). Morgan argues that in conversion narratives

the pattern [of the experience of conversion] is so plain as to give the experience the appearance of a stereotype: first comes a feeble and false awakening to God’s commands and a pride in keeping them pretty well, but also much backsliding.

¹³⁹ All page references to Morgan in this paragraph are to his book *Visible Saints*

Disappointments and disasters lead to other fitful hearkenings to the Word. Sooner or later true legal fear or conviction enables the individual to see his hopeless and helpless condition and to know his own righteousness cannot save him, that Christ is his only hope. Thereafter comes the infusion of saving grace... A struggle between faith and doubt ensues, with the candidate careful to indicate that his assurance has never been complete and that his sanctification has been much hampered by his own sinful heart.

(*Visible Saints*, pp.90-1)

By 1640, Morgan concludes, 'the New Englanders had evolved practices so uniform that both critics and advocates could agree in describing them' (p.88).¹⁴⁰

Conversion narratives came to be an important feature of the New England churches; critics such as Caldwell have argued that this was partly due to the influential minister John Cotton, who was enthusiastically in favour of public statements of spiritual development. The 1648 Cambridge Platform, which attempted to reach general agreement on theological matters in New England, declares in its chapter 'Of the Admission of Members Into the Church' that 'The doors of the churches of Christ upon earth do not by God's appointment stand so wide open, that all sorts of people, good or bad, may enter therein at their pleasure; but such as are admitted thereto, as members, ought to be examined and tried first, whether they be fit and meet to be received into church society or not.' On the other hand, it should be remembered that less than half the population ever actually gave conversion narratives and were accepted as full church members (Hall, p.128), so the narratives were genuinely intended to restrict church membership rather than become a universal rite of passage.

Patricia Caldwell has disagreed with Morgan's insistence on the universally recognised form of the conversion experience by arguing, in *The Puritan Conversion Narrative*, that conversion narratives from New England show significant differences from those given in England (p.67). Despite having a general structure and concerns in common – which she refers to as 'the expectable sequence of sin, preparation, and assurance; conviction, compunction, and submission, fear, sorrow, and faith' – she argues that New England conversion narratives are more likely to discuss the physical changes involved in migration to America rather than focusing on purely personal spirituality, and tend to demonstrate both more reference to scripture and also more discontent, with less of a drive towards resolution, than can be seen in the English equivalents (Caldwell, pp.2, 34, 87). Shea also argues that

¹⁴⁰ Other historians disagree and refer to a simpler five-stage progression experienced by Puritan converts, of election, vocation, justification, sanctification and glorification. See for example Francis J. Bremer, *The Puritan Experiment: New England Society from Bradford to Edwards* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), pp.22-3; William Haller, *The Rise of Puritanism, or, The Way to the New Jerusalem as Set Forth in Pulpit and Press from Thomas Cartwright to John Lilburne and John Milton, 1570 – 1643* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1938) Patricia Caldwell goes further in and argues that in fact only two steps of repentance were recognised (p.67)

New England conversion narratives can be distinguished from those in England by the different ways in which they are structured.¹⁴¹ Richter, to some extent, reconciles these positions by insisting that

Long or short, to one degree or another, Puritan ministers taught their flocks to tell stories about themselves that in some way conformed to the morphology. [...] The result was a highly constrained literary form, the product of intensive training in how the conversion process was supposed to work. These formal constraints, however, no more prevented personal imaginative expression for conversion narrators than they did for contemporary European composers of sonnets and fugues.

(Richter, p.120)

Richter points to the difference between English and New England conversion narratives as an example of such variation. Caldwell also argues that American conversion narratives demonstrated a literary morphology of conversion, not an arrangement of steps that the convert was expected to progress through smoothly (Caldwell, p.178). This suggests, perhaps, that the pattern was not so fixed as to preclude the possibility of Christian Native American converts differing slightly from the English but still being accepted as sincere.

In short, modern scholars differ almost as much in their analysis of the form taken by conversion as did seventeenth-century theological thinkers, but the generally recognised pattern was that the convert would be overcome with grief at their own sinfulness; experience spiritual struggles with corruption and unbelief; and finally gain a feeling of faith and hope in their own redemption, and a desire to participate in the “ordinances” of baptism and the Lord’s supper. These feelings are generally expressed in autobiographical narrative form in the captivity narrative, which usually demonstrated a progression from ignorance, through spiritual struggle, to some form of tentative resolution. Since the battle with Satan and temptation was seen to be lifelong and spiritual peace only ever temporary, the most important element looked for in a conversion narrative was evidence that there was some work of God on the speaker’s soul.

That the writers of the Eliot Tracts would have expected their readers to be familiar with such expectations, is suggested by Joseph Caryl’s foreword to *A Further Account of the Progress of the Gospel Among the Indians in New England*, which highlights what readers should be looking for as they read the Praying Indians conversion narratives:

Hee that attentively readeth the Report... will see much cause to admire the free grace and goodness of God to them, as also his mighty power and the revealing of his arme in them. What strong and clear convictions of sin, both of the sinfulness of their natures,

¹⁴¹ Daniel B. Shea, *Spiritual Autobiography in Early America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968)

and of the sins of their lives have they been under, who lay (before) dead in trespasses and sins, wholly alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them? What strugglings and strivings with corruption and temptation do they speak of, before they could come off from sin, and from that vain conversation received by tradition from their Fore-fathers? What wrestlings had they with unbelief, before they could close with Christ in the promise? What full resignations of themselves have they made to the commands of Christ after closing with him by faith in the promise? Yea, what hungriings and thirstings do some of them express with more intimate communion with Christ in attendance upon all his Ordinances in a Church-state or holy Fellowship with his people?

(*Further Account*, "To All")

In their first attempt to give conversion narratives, in 1653, the Praying Indians who spoke were judged to show spiritual promise, but not yet to be ready to form a church. In 1659, they tried again and were successful; as a result, it is possible to look closely at how individuals among the groups developed their spiritual narratives over the intervening years. There were fifteen narratives in *Tears of Repentance*, the 1653 tract, and eight in *A Further Account of the Progress of the Gospel Among the Indians in New England*; the latter tract also records two versions of each speaker's narrative, recorded on the two different occasions on which they were called on to speak. For the final part of this chapter, I will examine in detail the way one of the Praying Indians, Nishohkou, changed and developed his conversion narrative between 1653 and 1659. Nishohkou is particularly interesting to discuss. He was chosen as one of the rulers at Natick, although he was initially reluctant to take up the responsibility: he relates in his later narratives how he only accepted that it was the will of God after his wife and child died. Nishohkou is also a useful subject to discuss because he made four confessions, two of which are reported in each text; this makes it easier to demonstrate how his telling of his own story progressed, and also to check whether he was consistent in the way he chose to present his story in his two tellings in 1653 and in 1659, or whether he constructed his narrative at random each time. After all, as Eliot commented, there were bound to be some differences between the different accounts they made of themselves, and this could even be taken as a sign of their sincerity and spontaneity:

my Bro. *Peirson* observed, that they left out something, and added another, and varied in sundry expressions: It is true, I observed the same, and it may well be so, for they have not any writing, or like helps, only their memory, and the help of Gods Spirit, to read in their own hearts, what they utter.

(*Further Account*, pp.45-6)

Looking at two sets of two narratives with a gap of six years between the two sets will help to distinguish which differences are only variations in phrasing and which are more important;

furthermore, it should be possible to judge whether there is in fact any significant change in the way Nishohkou presents himself in the earlier and later narratives. It will also provide a way to check that the whole narrative had not been learned by rote, in which case it would evidently not reflect Nishohkou's individual self-fashioning after all.

Nishohkou's Narratives

Nishohkou's first narrative is very short, which Eliot partly explains was due to the transcribing: 'many things he spoke that I missed, for want of through (*sic*) understanding some words and sentences' (p.32); however, it was this version alone which was read to the Elders at the first meeting, and this is the version they would have judged.¹⁴² Assuming that what Eliot missed followed the tenor of the rest of the piece (which is confirmed by the similarities with his other narrative made in that period, which I will examine below) it is noticeable that the text is not a narrative, but almost entirely a statement of current belief. Although it begins by mentioning that he did not understand Christian teaching to begin with, and then began to believe, the majority of the text is structured around a series of statements of desire to follow Christian teaching, followed by regrets that he has not been able to maintain this:

when you taught these words, *Be wise, Oh all ye people, and beleeve in Jesus Christ*, then I prayed unto God; yet afterwards I sinned, and almost foresook praying to God. Afterwards I understood, That God who made all the World was merciful to sinners: and truly I saw my heart very sinful, because I promised God to pray as long as I live, but my heart hath not so done. Again I promised God I will follow Christ in al things, and now I find my heart backward, and not so forward to make a Church.

(p.32)

The pattern is epitomised by the first words of the narrative: 'God in Heaven is merciful, and I am sinful' (p.32); it sums up by repeating the doctrine of forgiveness for the repentant and a statement that he can do nothing but Christ can make him believe.

This statement, while containing orthodox Puritan sentiments and the kind of emotion and awareness of sin which Joseph Caryl would have approved of, bears little resemblance to the usual narrative statement of God's intervention in the life of a saint. Nishohkou's second 1653 narrative, while longer and much more detailed, follows the same pattern. He mentions a time before he was converted at the beginning of his statement: 'before I prayed to God, I did commit all filthynesse, I prayed to many gods, I was proud, full of lusts, adulteries, and all other sins, and therefore this is my first Confession, that God is mercifull, and I am a sinner, for God hath given unto me instruction and causeth me to

¹⁴² All page references to Nishohkou's two 1653 narratives in the text are from the Tract *Tears of Repentance*

pray unto God' (p.33). He also hopes for forgiveness in the future at the end: 'I desire, Oh I desire pardon: but I sometimes think Christ doth not delight in me because I do much play the hypocrite, but if I truly beleeeve then he will pardon, but true faith I cannot work; Oh Jesus Christ help me, and give it me' (p.36). However, beyond these brief indications of some spiritual development over time, the rest of the narrative follows the same pattern as the shorter statement: a list of ways Nishohkou has attempted to live better and failed, reformed and relapsed, with the implication that he is living in a constant cycle of trying and failing which changes but does not develop.

I thought God was angry, because I have greatly sinned; desiring to do well, and yet again to sin. When I desired to do well, then I sinned, and in all things I sinned. But afterwards I was angry with my self, and thought I will not sin again; and what God saith, is good, but I am sinful because I have done all these evils.

(p.34)

The main difference between Nishohkou's first and second confessions is the introduction of the idea of his hypocrisy in the second narrative, although it is uncertain whether Eliot simply failed to hear this the first time, or whether Nishohkou changed his way of expressing himself between the two sections.

Again, I heard it was a good way to come to the Meetings, and hear the Word of God, and I desired so to do it; but in this also I sinned, because I did not truly hear; yea, sometimes I thought it no great matter if I heard not, and cared not to come to hear, and still I so sinned... sometimes I say I know Christ, because I know he died for us, and hath redeemed us, and procured pardon for us: yet again I say I sin, yet I beleeeve not Christ, for that only is right to beleeeve in Christ, and do what he saith; but I think I do this in vain, because I yet do not truly beleeeve in Jesus Christ, nor do what he commandeth, and therefore my heart plays the hypocrite; and now I know what is hypocrisie, namely, when I know what I should do, and yet do it not.

(pp.34-5)

Passages such as these suggest some progression in learning and outward piety which is matched by a continuing inner sinfulness and unbelief; but this is not emphasised in the structure of the telling, instead being mingled haphazardly with the same sort of statements as the first confession. This consistency between the two 1653 narratives suggests that they are likely to be good representations of the way Nishohkou presented himself at that moment, and that the words he chose to use to express his spiritual state were relatively consistent at this point in time.

Having established the general structuring of Nishohkou's first set of confessions, and the ways he expressed himself, I will now look at the second set of narratives, spoken by him in 1659 and printed

by Eliot in *A Further Account* in 1660.¹⁴³ These immediately appear more closely related to conventional English and New England conversion narratives, because both are based much more clearly on a linear narrative than the earlier confessions were. The first, spoken before the Elders of Roxbury and 'sundry Christian people... men and women', begins with a prayer for the aid of God to aid him as he tries to 'confesse truth and grace' (p.3). Nishohkou then paraphrases Genesis to introduce the idea of original sin and applies it to his early life, before beginning the story of his conversion. Unlike the earlier confessions, he begins most sections with a time-marker: 'After we prayed to God about three years, my heart was not yet right' (p.3), 'About two years after, I began to understand what the Minister preached' (p.4), 'After half a year I heard the Minister preach this' (p.5); only towards the end, when he reaches the point of the present day, does the text begin more to resemble the mixture of spiritual desire and lack of fulfilment seen in the earlier confessions.

As well as the structure of the narrative, its content demonstrates a progression in Nishohkou's presentation of his religious experience, and it is one which matches the more general pattern of English conversion narratives, beginning with ignorance and a lack of interest:

I went to *Pauwwauing* among others, and these things I loved thoroughly, and they grew in my heart, and had nourishment there, and especially lust; if I cut my hair, it was with respect to lust, to please women; if I had long hair, it was with respect to lust, and all I did was with respect to lust and women; when there were meetings, drinkings, sports, they respected lust, and these things I perfectly loved. When the Minister came to teach us, hee taught, and I came to meeting; but I came to look upon women, I understood not what he taught; sometimes I came, and understood nothing at all, only I look't on women.

(p.4)

This is followed by a fear of consequences and an early and unsuccessful desire to repent:

Again, in that 6. of *Gen.* God rebuked that sin in man, which was my sin, and then my heart was troubled. Sometime my heart said, it is better to run wilde as I did before, then to pray to God; for if now I sin, or commit lust, I shall be punished, or put in prison; but if I run wilde, I have liberty to sin without danger: but I was ashamed of such thoughts, and repented; but yet I doubted.

(pp.4-5)

Next comes a surface piety which is not a true conversion:

¹⁴³ All page references to Nishohkou's second two narratives in 1659 are from the Tract *A Further Account*

Again, Mat.6. Christ saith, *Be ye not like hypocrites, which seem to pray before men.* I thought this was my case, I did only pray before men, but I doubted of Christ and his grace.

(p.6)

And also frequent relapses and returns to attempt to live well:

Then was my heart weary, and I desired again to do well, and amend, but I found my self very weak. Sometime my heart hated praying to God, and meeting on the Sabbath dayes; and therefore I see I deserve hell torments: and then I cryed, Oh Christ pardon all these my sins. Then afterward my heart desired strongly to pray unto God, but I saw I deserved misery and punishment, and I was weak.

(p.7)

Unlike many English and New England conversion narratives, Nishohkou does not report a feeling of personal certainty from God; none of the Native American converts does this, although it is common in other narratives. Richter, in *Facing East from Indian Country*, argues that this is typical of the Praying Indian conversion narratives in the *Tracts*: while all of the converts make reference to the stages of preparation (hearing the word, understanding the law, recognising their sinfulness and despairing in legal fear), it is less likely, although not unknown, for their narratives to demonstrate that they have reached the stages associated with the elect in the stages of grace, and very rare for them to make any claim to divine assurance (Richter, p.121). Richter also notes that the Praying Indians tend to talk about sins against the second, rather than the first table – the opposite of the English (Richter, p.123). He concludes that these differences from English narratives, in particular their emphasis on pardon and anger, demonstrate how they had maintained a traditional Native American spiritual emphasis on respectful reciprocity and on the need to maintain relationships and community, which they had combined with Puritan forms of the conversion narrative (Richter, pp.127-8).

Nishohkou certainly does not claim to have received divine assurances of grace; instead, he ends by stating his desire to 'be made strong by Church-covenant, Baptism, and the Lords Supper, which might be as a Fort to keep me from enemies, as a Fort keepeth us from our outward enemies' (p.7). This pattern is seen through many of the other narratives; many end by stating this as their desire, which was, of course, the reason why the meeting was being held. As the earlier quotation shows, Joseph Caryl, representing a contemporary observer, accepts this desire as a sign of grace; it is also notable that the section of the 1648 Cambridge Platform that dealt with admissions to the church emphasised that 'The weakest measure of faith is to be accepted in those that desire to be admitted into the church, because weak Christians, if sincere, have the substance of that faith, repentance and holiness, which is required in church members; and such have most need of the ordinances for their

confirmation and growth in grace.’¹⁴⁴ Those observing the narratives must have been in general agreement with this, because although Nishohkou and the other candidates all made confessions lacking in the insistence on feeling assurances of grace which were typical in English and New England statements, they ended the meeting by demanding that more translators be present to be sure the narratives were accurate, rather than making reservations about the suitability of the candidates. Interestingly, however, they questioned Nishohkou more specifically at the end of his narrative

Elder Heath propounded this Question, which hee answered in broken English.

Question. Whether doth Satan still tempt you with former lusts and temptations? and what do you when you are tempted?

Answer to the first part. Yes, alwaies to this day. *To the second part:* When Devil comes, I sometime too much believe him, but sometime I remember to do Gods word, because Gods Word is all one a sword, and breaks the Devils temptations.

Deacon Park propounded this Question. What is it in sin, why hee hateth it now more than before?

Answ. his answer in broken English. I did love sin, but now not all one so, because I hear Gods Word, and that shewes mee, that which I loveth is evil, and will bring mee to hell, therefore I love it not now.

Deacon Park urged, Doth hee hate sin because it is against God?

Answ. That chiefly.

(pp.8-9)

This suggests that although his narrative was judged to be generally acceptable, his listeners were listening carefully for the appropriate emotions and thoughts to appear in the narrative, and were prepared to ask further questions if they did not hear everything they thought ought to be there.

Nishohkou's second confession in *A Further Account* is very similar to this first one, although it contains more detail and is clearly worded differently, suggesting that it was a spontaneous creation as opposed to a memorised or taught speech. The differences are matters of detail and emphasis: he talks more about his life before the missionaries began preaching, perhaps hinting at the innocence of Adam before the Fall with his declaration that 'I knew it [lust] not to be a sin, but an excellent delight' (p.38). Contemporary listeners, however, would have seen this ignorance not as sinlessness, but as evidence of his 'natural' state, his conscience as yet unawakened by God to a true understanding of morality. He also reveals that he was elected, and refused to serve, as a leader until his wife and child died, which the minister persuaded him might be a sign of God's anger (pp.39-40). Much of the rest of the confession is very similar to his previous 1659 speech, however, with the same biblical quotations

¹⁴⁴ 1648 Cambridge Platform, Chapter XII: Of the Admission of Members into the Church

emerging as key points in his conversion; in particular he repeats the story of Noah, the significance of the death of Christ, and 'that word, *He that doubteth, is like a wave of the Sea, driven to and fro, and tossed*; and that word, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth freely, and upbraideth no man*' (p.38).

In summary, then, Nishohkou's depiction of his religious experience develops significantly over the six years between the Praying Indian group's two attempts to gain church membership. Although the content of his experiences does not change significantly – a greater emphasis on hypocrisy is the main development in this respect – the structuring and presentation of them changes radically, moving from an outpouring of ideas and experiences to a largely chronologically-ordered, structured narrative of religious progression. In the earlier two confessions Nishohkou consistently treats his confession as an expression of his thoughts and emotions about his religious experience, mixing important events, successes and failures, addresses to God, and significant biblical passages and doctrine into one statement. In his later narratives, however, Nishohkou structures his content into speeches which much more closely resemble the progressive structure which is typical of English and New England conversion narratives, with a movement from sinful ignorance to fear, shallow conversion and backsliding, and finally a deeper understanding of sin and a desire to call on God for repentance and salvation – although not yet a feeling of assurance in salvation. And this change of form rather than content is representative of the other narratives which are printed in *Tears of Repentance* and *A Further Account*.

We cannot know for sure how the Praying Indians learnt to structure their narratives in a way which the New England church and the readers of the Eliot Tracts would find convincing: whether they learnt from listening to New England public statements, or were taught explicitly by Eliot, or even whether his sermons were structured in such a way as to encourage converts to think of their spiritual experience as a narrative. Later Praying Indians would have benefited from Eliot's translation, sometime soon after 1663, of Lewis Bayly's *Practice of Pietie*, one of the Puritan manuals mentioned earlier which discussed the signs of salvation. At around the same time, Eliot also translated the *Christian Covenanting Confession*, a one-page sheet explicitly designed to help converts prepare for church membership; but this was after the date of the narratives of Nishohkou and his contemporaries (Kellaway, pp.133-6, 141-2). However they learnt, it was the fact that they did discover how to structure their experiences to fit their listeners' expectations which led to these Christian Native Americans achieving their goal: church membership. Although the content of their confessions does not change greatly, the church authorities sent them away politely as promising candidates after their first attempt, and allowed them to become church members in the second: I agree with Bross's analysis that it was clearly how they told their stories, rather than the stories themselves – the internalised 'elements of the genre', in Bross's words, that were being judged as the measure of their spiritual state (Bross, pp.89-90). Lisa M. Goulds further argues that the conversion narrative form is

not a transparent account of spiritual history, but rather a literary form which itself helps to define and constitute the writer's conversion. Authors of conversion narratives do not simply describe their experiences, but rather place those experiences in the context of familiar paradigms.¹⁴⁵

This links back interestingly to Kibbey's claim that Puritan conversion was seen as a linguistic event, with conversion being marked by a change in the subject's system of reference in response to the preacher's words. Although I would disagree with this in terms of the conversion experience as a whole, it seems strongly applicable to a specific discussion of conversion narratives (Kibbey, pp.7-8). All this suggests that although material symbols were useful in persuading colonists to accept Praying Indians as attempting to become Christians, when it came to the conversion narrative itself it was the way experiences were understood and described which was crucial.

Edmund S. Morgan, in *Visible Saints*, argued that the morphology of conversion, and the expected structure of captivity narratives, were an expression of Puritan 'efforts to direct human relations into a consistent pattern derived from Biblical precepts' (xii-ix). In this chapter, however, I have demonstrated that although the colonial Puritans attempted to reframe and reshape Praying Indian lives and life-stories into consistent patterns that they recognised, such patterns were not purely biblically derived, but were also deeply rooted in seventeenth-century English culture and society.

Conclusions

Studying the Eliot Tracts can show us the ways in which those Native American individuals and groups who decided to convert to Protestant Christianity shaped their lives, and had their efforts presented in writing, in order to fit Puritan conceptions of the acceptable way to live a Christian life. This experience of massive cultural change must have been traumatic for the Praying Indians, but through the Eliot Tracts we can see how they adapted to fit the demands of converted life. They also created a new form of Protestant Christianity which fitted their own needs and preferences, developing an emphasis on prayer which distinguished their worship from that of the English colonists.

Critics such as Richter and Wyss emphasise the intercultural adaptation shown to be possible by the Eliot Tracts, and suggest that there was a potential for a future of peaceful cultural coexistence, in which the Praying Indians had created a cultural space for themselves within Puritanism (Richter,

¹⁴⁵ Lisa M. Goulds, "The Conversion Narrative in Early America" in Susan Castillo and Ivy Schweitzer, *A Companion to the Literatures of Colonial America* (Malden MA, Oxford and Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Blackwell, 2005) 369-386, p.371

p.250; Wyss, pp.1-15). However, it is doubtful how much they were genuinely accepted by colonists, and how much they were tolerated because of their value in the eyes of the English audiences who supported the missions. It is certainly the case that the attempts of missionaries and Praying Indians alike to find a place for Christian Native Americans within the colonial church were cut through by the racist hysteria of King Philip's War, which broke out in 1675. Such was the anti-Indian feeling in the colonies that the Praying Indians were disarmed and imprisoned in what was essentially a concentration camp on Deer Island, only being released in order to carry out scouting or fighting missions for their captors. In such a climate, the subtle signs developed by converts and missionaries to show their involvement in English culture were ignored; and even after the conflict ended, the Praying Towns never recovered to their pre-war extent, being reduced from fourteen towns to only four.¹⁴⁶ Lepore argues that King Philip's War meant the end of the missionary programme, and the end of the zeal, autonomy and finally language of the Praying Towns, where English eventually became the language of Christian Indians. This has, however, been questioned by Kristina Bross, who analyses Eliot's post-war publication, *Dying Speeches of Several Indians*, to suggest that even if the missionaries despaired, their converts did not.¹⁴⁷ Bross also argues that although King Philip's War changed the way the Praying Indians were interpreted, the figure of the Christian Indian created in the Tracts was still drawn on, and had an important effect on Indian-colonial relations in the period after the conflict (p.144). This may be true of the English viewpoint; but it did not help the Praying Indians themselves, who after the outbreak of King Philip's War discovered that the careful ways they had discovered to signal their identities to English observers now signified something entirely different and threatening. From now on, the Praying Indians would have to adapt and find different ways in which to signal and defend their Christian identities.

Having looked at the ways in which Native Americans attempted to become accepted into the religion of the colonies by adopting the conventions and unspoken rules that governed congregational membership in the period, I will turn, in the next chapter, to another group who forced the colonists to question and adapt their ideas about their own religious identity. This time, however, the other group were not cultural outsiders from the area, asking to be accepted and struggling to adopt Puritan conventions; instead, the group I will examine in the next chapter attacked Puritan ideas from within, culturally, even while they came from outside the colonies geographically. The Quakers who began to appear in New England in the 1650s were not only also English Protestants, brought up in the same tradition as the Congregational Calvinists, but they were also religious radicals who shared many ideas about language and its role in shaping group identity with the colonists themselves. By looking at this very different example of a group forcing the colonists to question their established ideas, I will

¹⁴⁶ Vaughan, *New England Frontier*, pp.280-308; Axtell, *After Columbus*, pp.49-50; Kellaway, *The New England Company*, p.116

¹⁴⁷ Jill Lepore, 'Dead Men Tell No Tales: John Sassamon and the Fatal Consequences of Literacy' in *American Quarterly* 46.4 (December 1994) pp.479-512. Bross argues that 'Eliot's bleak vision was met by the Praying Indians vigorous assertion of their community's present health and future existence.' p.205

demonstrate another facet of the relationship between language and the creation of religious identity in the seventeenth-century New England colonies.

3. Usurping Colonial Narratives: The Quaker Challenge to Puritan Identity

Introduction

In this chapter I will look at another group who challenged Puritan identity in the seventeenth-century New England colonies. This time, the challenge initially came from outside the colonies geographically; but in terms of the culture of the colonists, it was an attack from within. The Quakers who travelled to New England had often already been radical Protestants before they were converted to this new sect: one of the four hanged in Boston, Mary Dyer, was still technically a member of a church in that city.

As a result, the “Quaker invasion” of the late 1650s and early 1660s offers a useful contrast to the missionary programme and the process of Praying Indian conversion which was taking place over the same period. While the difficulties the Praying Indians faced were largely due to their lack of previous knowledge of the English cultural signs linked to the idea of conversion, the reason the Quakers posed such a challenge to the New England orthodoxy was *because* of their cultural familiarity with Puritan rhetoric and language.

The issue of Quaker identity and its threat to Puritan identity is bound up with issues of language. Although direct translation is not an issue here as it was for the Praying Indians, both Puritans and Quakers held beliefs which influenced their use of words and rhetoric to such an extent that historians talk about a distinct language associated with each of these groups. Both were associated with the ‘plain style’, and Quakers in particular took this to an extreme. They insisted on treating conventional utterances as literal statements, refused to use certain forms of language such as oaths, and (most famously) used the familiar forms ‘thou’ and ‘thee’ to everyone, including their social superiors. The fact that Quaker language was similar to that of the Puritans but took it a step further is symptomatic of the relationships of the two groups in New England.¹⁴⁸

I have found Richard Bauman’s book, *Let Your Words Be Few*, to be extremely useful in developing this argument. Bauman looks in detail at the preoccupation of Quakers with language, which he argues was not only ‘extended throughout the linguistic and sociolinguistic usages of the Quakers, making for a distinctive, symbolically resonant Quaker communicative style’, but was also a feature of many radical sects in revolutionary England at the time (p.4). He argues that this was a period when people gave ‘attention not only to ideas about language, but to *functions* of language, to the role of

¹⁴⁸ For a useful discussion of Quaker language, see Richard Bauman, *Let Your Words Be Few: Symbolism of Silence and Speaking Among Seventeenth-Century Quakers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), in particular pp.8, 43-9

language as structured by and giving substance to ideology, social relations, groups and institutions. This is not only language as thought about, but language as *used* by society at large to enact or negotiate social identities and to accomplish social goals' (p.5). Bauman looks at England rather than at the Quakers in the New England colonies, so the situation discussed in this chapter is rather different; rather than a multitude of competing voices, there was a defined official, dominant voice that the Quakers challenged. The direct contention between these two voices allows us to see how the Quakers were challenging Puritan identity and threatening the ways they understood themselves and their religious identity.

I will begin this chapter with some background to the arrival of the Quakers in New England and the beliefs associated with this new group, before going on to discuss the reasons why the Puritan authorities there were so threatened by this new sect. I will then discuss the ways in which Quakers used language, and in particular the authority traditionally given to the words of the dying, and to some extent to the suffering, and its relationship to recent English cultural history – in particular to the martyrology recorded by Foxe in his *Acts and Monuments of the English Martyrs*. I will conclude by looking at the ways the Massachusetts authorities attempted to counter the Quaker attacks on their religious identity, and a discussion of why the Quaker rhetoric appears to have been more successful.

Historical Background

Born in the breakdown of governmental and church authority during the Interregnum, Quakerism developed from 1652.¹⁴⁹ The impetus behind the development of the group was largely the work of George Fox, who helped bring together groups of Seekers, predominantly in northern England; the historian Worrall has suggested that Quakerism was successful in the parts of England which had historically lacked clergy, and whose inhabitants therefore felt alienated from organised religion and open to the idea of a universal inner Light.¹⁵⁰ The movement grew fast, from five hundred people in England in 1652 to 20,000 in 1657 (Selleck, pp.3-6). The name 'Quaker' was originally intended as an insult, as 'Puritan' had been a hundred years before; but just as the Puritans themselves did, the Quakers eventually adopted the name for themselves. Early Quakers called themselves children of light or friends of the truth; the name 'Society of Friends' was only adopted later (Selleck, pp.4-6). As a result, I will use the term 'Quaker' in this chapter, as in the period writers usually referred to themselves as being those 'whom they call in scorn cursed *Quakers*' and similar phrases.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Carla Gardina Pestana, *Quakers and Baptists in Colonial Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p.4

¹⁵⁰ Arthur J. Worrall, *Quakers in the Colonial Northeast* (Hanover NH and London: University Press of New England, 1980), p.5; see also Pestana, p.7, and George A. Selleck, *Quakers in Boston 1656-1964: Three Centuries of Friends in Boston and Cambridge* (Friends Meeting at Cambridge, 1976) pp.4-5

¹⁵¹ Joseph Nicholson, *The Standard of the Lord Lifted up in New England* (London, 1660) p.5

The early Quakers, unlike the peaceful group of today, were radical and very visible; many of their contemporaries found them shocking, and they were victims of much persecution in England. Over time, as their behaviour became more widely recognised, they became tolerated, if not entirely accepted. When they first arrived in New England in 1656, however, their ideas and actions were new to many of the colonists, although some had already heard about them by letter from England and Barbados before the first of them arrived in Boston.

A meeting in England in 1655 had led to about sixty of the Friends feeling a call to travel and preach all over the world, acting as 'Publishers of the Truth' and making contact with others who they were confident would recognise and acknowledge them as soon as they met; they believed that 'that of God' in each of them would be able to recognise other believers and communicate with them without words (Bauman, pp.27-9). The first Quakers to arrive in New England, in July 1656, were two women, Ann Austin and Mary Fisher, who arrived on a ship from English via Barbados. They were immediately imprisoned in Boston and kept isolated: not only were they denied access to writing materials, but the prison windows were also boarded up, and a fine of five pounds imposed on anyone who spoke to them. The executioner publicly burned their books and papers, and five weeks later, on 5th August, the boat they had arrived in carried them out of the colony again.

Two days later, however, a group of eight more Quakers arrived in the *Speedwell* from London. They were also imprisoned and eventually sent back to their ports of origin. Punitive laws were passed in Massachusetts in October 1656 to try to keep Quakers out of the colony: any shipmaster importing Quakers was fined one hundred pounds, and the Quaker was to be whipped at the House of Correction and then kept at work with no communication with anyone else. A local man, Nicholas Upsall, protested and was fined and banished, moving to Rhode Island, and later becoming a Quaker himself.¹⁵²

The Massachusetts authorities, who passed more severe laws against Quakers than any of the other colonies, discovered to their dismay that this rather encouraged than put off these visitors, who were undeterred by punishment and on the contrary felt encouraged by the Spirit to come to Boston to challenge its laws. A 1657 law was passed by the authorities to increase the existing penalties, fining those who sheltered Quakers and threatening returning Quakers with ear cropping and having a hole bored in their tongues (Worrall, p.11). Despite this, in 1657 there began what many historians have followed Selleck's lead in referring to as a 'Quaker invasion of Boston', beginning with the arrival of Ann Burden and the previously Antinomian colonist Mary Dyer, who had followed Hutchinson out of Boston to Rhode Island in the 1630s (Selleck, p.3). Like the earlier women, they were imprisoned, and Burden was sent back to England, while Dyer was released to her husband on the promise that

¹⁵² The previous two paragraphs are based on summaries of early Quaker arrivals in Boston by Selleck, pp.1-17; Worrall, pp.9-10; Pestana, pp.29-30

she would not communicate with anyone in the colony as she left (Selleck, p.3). In July 1657 eleven Quakers arrived in New England in a small boat called the *Woodhouse*, and despite the ban on Quaker entry to the colony, most of them eventually managed to travel to Massachusetts via New Amsterdam and Rhode Island, some making converts in Salem on the way (Worrall, p.10). Again, they were arrested, imprisoned and whipped in Boston, and finally banished in November 1657 (Selleck, p.9).

The colonial authorities attempted to deal with this 'Quaker invasion' by increasing the severity of the laws again in 1658, which among other provisions allowed for the banishment of Quakers from the colony on pain of death. Quakers continued to enter and re-enter the colony in protest, however; a protest which was now joined by groups of New England Quakers who had been converted by the English missionaries, and who lived predominantly on Long Island, and in Plymouth and Rhode Island (Worrall, pp.9-12). The ultimate outcome of this refusal by both sides to retreat from their positions was the execution of four Quakers in Boston, after they had returned from their original banishment. The first two, Marmaduke Stephenson and William Robinson, were hanged in October 1659. Mary Dyer followed them in the spring of 1660, having originally been sentenced at the same time as the two men but reprieved and sent out of the colony (Worrall, p.12). In May 1661, William Leddra was also executed. Boston was the only place to execute people on the grounds of their Quakerism alone, although in other places Quakers died due to prison conditions or other reasons related to official or unofficial persecution (Selleck, ix). But only in Boston did Quakers die publicly, as part of a state ritual of execution, and after having refused all opportunities to leave and escape their fate.

Leddra was the last Quaker to be executed in Boston, although others were sentenced to death and later reprieved. 1660 had been a significant year, with the Restoration of Charles II overturning the previous political order, and the King's apparent early sympathy to the causes of non-conformism and freedom of conscience forcing a change in tactics by the colonies (Selleck, pp.1-17). Although, previously, under the rule of Parliament, there had been unease in the more turbulent and liberal England over colonial treatment of the Quakers, now, under fear of royal interference in the legal system of the colonies, Massachusetts was forced to release Quakers and justify their actions to the king. The presence of these English observers meant that texts written by both Quakers and Puritans demonstrate an awareness of their dual audience, on each side of the Atlantic, and they attempt to exploit this in their appeals.

This happened even on a legal level. One Quaker, Wenlock Christian, had been sentenced to death in June 1661, but appealed to England, and was eventually released and banished from the colony along with nearly thirty other Quakers who had been imprisoned (Pestana, p.23). After the arrival of the King's *Mandamus*, in November 1661, ordering Quaker prisoners to be sent to England to be tried, the authorities repealed penalties for Quakerism itself, and instead punished Quakers for

vagrancy or absence from church. Banishment on pain of death was replaced with the Cart and Whip Act, and the authorities contented themselves with whipping Quakers out of the colony, rather than executing them (Selleck, p.15). The sect gradually became tolerated in Boston, although the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675 led to a resurgence of persecution, as colonists worried that God was punishing them for allowing heretics to live unpunished in the colonies (Selleck, p.15; Pestana, p.38).

Cultural and Political Tension

As suggested above, the period in which the Quakers began to appear in New England was one of unresolved cultural and political tension in New England, which complicated a situation that, as repeated references in the Quaker and anti-Quaker texts suggest, was one which keenly interested audiences across the Atlantic, as well as in New England. The year of the executions, 1660, was one in which relationships between England and its New England colonies were put under a level of scrutiny not experienced for decades, as the political situation changed dramatically with the Restoration of Charles II. The potential of royal interference in hitherto autonomous colonial affairs is the threat and promise which underlies the appeals made to English audiences by both Massachusetts authorities and Quaker writers.

This was also a period in which the colonies were facing an internal identity crisis. As several critics including Perry Miller and Philip Round have discussed, there was a change of generation and outlook in the colonies in this period.¹⁵³ In the 1650s and early 1660s, many of the important founding figures of the New England colonies were dying: John Cotton in 1652, Thomas Dudley in 1653, William Bradford in 1657 (Round, p.256). As a result, a new generation were taking over, and fears over the loss of authority and the increase of turbulent and disruptive speech were high.¹⁵⁴ The fact that the children of the first generation now had children of their own also contributed to another element of the crisis over New England identity at this point; as several critics including Myles and Pestana have pointed out, 1662 (the year after the last execution) was the year that the Halfway Covenant was composed, in an attempt to solve the social and theological tensions over whether the children of baptised non-church-members, the grandchildren of the full church members, could be baptised in their turn.¹⁵⁵

This debate was hugely important, given that it signalled an acceptance by colonial Puritans that the church congregations of New England were not automatically going to continue to be filled with

¹⁵³ Perry Miller, 'Errand into the Wilderness', *William and Mary Quarterly*, January 1953, Vol 10 Issue 1 pp3-32; Round, Phillip H., *By Nature and By Custom Cursed: Transatlantic Civil Discourse and New England Cultural Production, 1620-1660* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999)

¹⁵⁴ Kamensky, Jane, *Governing the Tongue: The Politics of Speech in Early New England* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) pp.8, 100

¹⁵⁵ Ann G. Myles, 'From Monster to Martyr: Reforming Mary Dyer' in *Early American Literature* 36.1 (2001) 1-30, p.15

enthusiastic church members; as a result, fears of declension began to be expressed. Kamensky has argued in her study of the spoken word in the colonies that this cultural perception that the spirituality and morality of the colonies was in a state of declension was often connected by writers to concerns over the debasement of speech and the decline of orators (Kamensky, pp.124-5). Given the arrival of Quaker missionaries who insisted on speaking what they believed to be words inspired by God, these tensions were bound to be exacerbated, as will be argued later in this chapter.

The execution of the four Quaker missionaries was a pivotal moment for New England, a series of events which forced the colonial authorities to reconsider and re-evaluate their self-image and understanding of their own identity. Although Quakers had been imprisoned and punished elsewhere, and some had died as a result of such legal action, no other government had felt it appropriate or possible to execute someone only for holding Quaker beliefs; in carrying out these death sentences, the Massachusetts government took a significant and irrevocable action.¹⁵⁶ In addition, the fact that they felt deeply uneasy about taking such a step is suggested by the eagerness with which they continued to insist, even after the executions, that 'had they at last but promised to depart the Jurisdiction, and not to return without leave from Authority, we should have been glad of such an opportunity to have said they should not dye'.¹⁵⁷

Quaker Identity

The key to understanding the reasons why the Quaker-Puritan conflict developed as it did in New England was the way in which the Quaker missionaries occupied a very similar cultural space to the previous generation of colonial Puritans, a space which their children and grandchildren still identified themselves as occupying. The Quakers, in effect, usurped an important part of Puritan religious identity. In order to discuss this, it will first be necessary to analyse what it was that Quakers believed, how they imagined themselves, and what were the signs and symbols used to identify them as a distinct group.

Firstly, it should be emphasised that Quaker beliefs were in many ways very similar to those of the congregational Calvinists. Both arose out of the same Protestant root, both had the same mistrust of 'Popish' ceremonies, and both laid great emphasis on vernacular preaching and reading of the scriptures.

¹⁵⁶ I should note that although this argument is in agreement with the analysis of most historians that it was Quaker beliefs which the Massachusetts authorities were trying to eliminate, Jonathan Chu argues that the authorities were concerned about the social disruptiveness of visiting Quakers, rather than their beliefs. Jonathan M. Chu, *Neighbours, Friends, Or Madmen: The Puritan Adjustment to Quakerism in Seventeenth Century Massachusetts Bay* (Westport, Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press, 1985), p.13

¹⁵⁷ [Massachusetts General Court], The Humble Petition and Address Of the General Court sitting at *Boston* in *New-England*, unto *The High and Mighty PRINCE CHARLES THE SECOND*. And presented unto His Most-Gracious Majesty *Feb. 11. 1660*. Printed in the Year 1660, p.6

There were several ways, however, in which they differed, which are emphasised by the historian Pestana, who argues that Quakerism represented a radical departure from previous Puritan beliefs (Pestana, pp.14-5). While the congregational Calvinists of New England and their equivalents across the Atlantic vested ultimate authority in the written word of God as manifested in the Bible, which they saw as the rule against which to measure the impulses of man's fallible spirit, Quakers rejected this as limiting the power of God. Francis Howgill, a Quaker writer, complained that 'the Spirit doth, will and may take up what thing it pleaseth to manifest it self and its mind unto the Creature, and who art thou? and what art thou? any thing but an *Egyptian* who would limit it, and tie it to Paper and Ink, to words and Syllables sounded and written in diverse Tongues, Languages and Characters [...] thou hast in plain words set the dead letter before the living Spirit, and saith, *that the Spirit is no Spirit unless it speak by the Scripture*.'¹⁵⁸ Quakers laid great emphasis on the Bible, but as a record of God's previous revelation to man, rather than a final rule and authority which would never be further added to by God (Bauman, pp.25-6).

Quakerism was also a movement which to some extent cut across class and gender lines. From the beginning, a mixture of different social classes were involved, as Selleck points out (p.4). Similarly, Quakers believed in the light of the Spirit which could be found in everyone, although it was only awoken and the individual made conscious of it after a conversion experience; they differed, therefore, from other Puritans in the exact form and effect they believed a conversion experience would take. Quakers also had a much greater openness to the idea that almost anybody could be converted and saved, although they shared with more orthodox Puritans their emphasis on the idea of a moment of religious awakening (Pestana, p.67). This emphasis on the presence of God in every believer, and the belief that God would move individuals to speak or act in certain situations, was at the root of Quaker worship, which took the Puritan mistrust of set ceremonies and rehearsed words one step further. There were no ministers or ordered service at all in Quaker worship, with an emphasis on the communal instead: men and women would sit together silently, searching for the inner light, until someone felt the impulse of God move them, at which point they would stand and speak or kneel and pray; whether they were truly moved by the spirit of God would be judged by the effect of their words on the listeners present.¹⁵⁹ This speech was open to anyone, regardless of gender, social standing or age.¹⁶⁰ This emphasis on the impulse of God and the belief that the light in each believer could be awakened led to an emphasis on preaching in public, sometimes interrupting church services or the preaching of other ministers, which was interpreted by authorities on both sides of the Atlantic as disruptive speech, but which Quakers insisted was their duty and responsibility to God (Bauman, pp.63-83):

¹⁵⁸ Francis Howgill, *The Heart of New-England Hardned (sic) through Wickednes* (London, 1659) p.17

¹⁵⁹ Bauman, pp.120 – 136; Selleck, pp.4-5; Pestana, pp.67

¹⁶⁰ Worrall, pp.4-7; Pestana, pp.11-12; Kamensky, p.119

Why we go into Meeting-places, or Markets, or elsewhere, to testifie to the Truth, and against Deceit[?]

Reason, Because we are moved of the Lord so to do; we are his, and where he bids us witness for him, and against deceivers and their deceit, we must do it; wo unto us (from the Lord) if we do it not.¹⁶¹

Quakers also laid great stress on living according to conscience and keeping laws explicitly laid down by Christ in the New Testament to the letter; they refused to take any kind of oaths, or to pay tithes or for the upkeep of churches, regarding the first of these as explicitly condemned by Christ, and the second two as Popish innovations which the Reformation had failed to root out (Selleck, pp.4-5; Worrall, pp.4-7). They rejected elaborate dress, and marks of purely social respect such as removing their hats to social betters and worldly authorities (Selleck, pp.4-5).

Such doctrinal questions were clearly crucially important, and underpinned the different ways in which Quaker religious beliefs and observances were developed in the period. However, except for their practice of public preaching, these beliefs were not the most noticeable element of Quaker identity. Although these beliefs may have set them apart theologically, it was the ways in which Quakerism was displayed materially and socially which led to the ability to identify Quakers, or for them to identify themselves as separate religious group, with its own group identity and shared characteristics.

In this I am in disagreement with the historian Chu, who argues that in equating Quakerism with 'prohibitions against long hair, periwigs, and the wearing of garments inappropriate to one's social station', in other words, by focusing on the outward behaviour of Quakers and not the issue of their heresy, the Massachusetts authorities trivialised it and divided opposition to it (Chu, p.94). However, as I argued in chapter two, the problem of how to identify spiritual truth or hypocrisy by judging external signs was a serious issue for Puritans in the period, and I will argue in this chapter that the ways in which they used such external signs allowed Quakers their opportunity to challenge colonial authority successfully.

What set Quakers apart and made them recognisable? They were acutely aware of the power and the danger of language, and Quaker identity demonstrated fundamental links between language and social identity; in fact, one critic has remarked that 'much of the religious and political conflict surrounding Quakerism implicated speaking in some way' (Bauman, p.43). Language is, of course, always a key part of the way in which we signal our social identity: our tone, our vocabulary, who we speak to and when, all these things are crucial in signalling our place in class and hierarchy and our membership of certain social groups. Quakerism is particularly illustrative of this because it

¹⁶¹ Isaac Penington, *A brief account of some reasons (amongst many that might be given) why those people called Quakers cannot do some things* ([London?], 1660). One-page broadside.

foregrounded language, and made it a part of Quaker doctrine and morality (Worrall, p.7). Taking up Quaker language became a conscious way of demonstrating your religious loyalties, and a way that outsiders could, in their turn, recognise Quakers. William Leddra accused the court that tried him of condemning him to death for trivialities: 'You will put me to Death for speaking English, and for not putting off my Cloathes'.¹⁶² And George Bishope noted that others were arrested as Quakers

upon *this* Proof only, that *they* were such, viz. The saying of *One* of *them* to *him*, [Thee] (which is the *Natural* Distinction (in *Word*) of *One* Man from *Many*, and as Proper as is the *Name* of *one* Man to Distinguish *him* from *Another*, and as *Generally* used [Thou and Thee] to a *Single Person* in *all* Languages, and the *Scriptures* of *Truth*, and to the *Lord* the *Maker* of all, in the *most* Solemn Addresses¹⁶³

The Quakers made such use of language to mark themselves as a separate group a conscious choice, and did so precisely because of its importance to signalling status and belonging in society – not to make themselves stand out, but because an important part of Quaker morality was concerned with refusing to participate in social mannerisms that would encourage pride or other sinful pleasing of the flesh.

This took many forms, not all of them directly linguistic. The most famous include the use of the familiar pronouns 'thee' and 'thou' rather than the formal plural 'you' when addressing individuals; the refusal to give 'hat honour' when saluting social superiors; and a refusal to use everyday greetings such as 'God be with you' and 'good day'. Although some of these are obviously linguistic and were directly linked to an individual's place in the social hierarchy – someone of lower rank could be addressed as 'thee', but in the other direction it was regarded as a direct insult and affront to authority – they are all tied together by the ways in which Quakers thought about language, and specifically, the ways in which they thought about the power of language. As Selleck and Bauman note, the use of 'thee' and 'thou', however much Quakers claimed it was merely more correct grammar, was in fact a refusal to acknowledge rank (Selleck, p.4; Bauman, p.55).

The Quaker understanding of language was both that it was powerful and that it was deceptive. Bauman, in *Let Your Words Be Few*, has described them as having a profound mistrust of language, which was one reason why they believed that they had to let their actions speak rather than relying on what people claimed about themselves; this was not far different from the Puritan concept of material 'signs of salvation' discussed in the previous chapter, and their belief in the need for the material appearance of your life to confirm the truth of your religious beliefs and practices. At the same time, however, Quakers demonstrated a belief in the power of language, by recognising and emphasising

¹⁶² Anon., *An Appendix to the Book, Entitled, New England Judged* (London, 1661) pp.195-6

¹⁶³ George Bishope, *New England Judged, not by man's, but the Spirit of the LORD* (London, 1661) p.7

its performative, literal aspect. When a Quaker refused to exchange greetings with a neighbour in the road, to say 'good day' or 'God be with you' or 'bless you', they claimed to do so partly because such greetings were likely to draw the traveller into vain and unprofitable worldly conversation, but also because they regarded such greetings not as meaningless social pleasantries but as statements, and believed that to utter them when they were false would be a lie and a sin (Bauman, pp.20-1, 43-9). Several writers, including Kamensky and Bauman, argue that the fact that they attacked 'carnall', worldly speech such as idle talk, while at the same time putting great emphasis on speech while influenced by the Holy Spirit, indicates how much importance Quakerism placed on words and speaking (Kamensky, pp.117-26; Bauman, pp.43-7).

And the use of the informal singular 'thou' rather than the polite 'you', although Quakers claimed that it was merely a more correct use of grammar, was also an attack on social deference.¹⁶⁴ Quaker writers insisted that no offence or contempt was meant, but they did intend to refuse to give social honour which might lead to pride and vanity, which had much the same effect on those in power around them (Bauman, p.49). So in a way, the use of 'thou' and 'thee' was very like the refusal to give 'hat honour'; although one manifestation was verbal and the other sartorial, both were seen by Quakers in terms of their concrete effect on social relationships and the pride and flattery that might result. Isaac Penington, in explaining '*why we cannot put off our hats to men*', might equally have been explaining why they could not offer them the social respect suggested by the use of 'you':

Because it lifts up that in man which God will destroy; it is sutable to that nature which is of the earth, & feeds it; it is pleasing to the flesh; and that which is an enemy to the flesh, cannot give it that which feed and pleaseth it; if we should please men, we should not be the servants of Christ. This is the true ground whereupon we cannot do it, and not in contempt to Authority, or any man's person. Neither can we respect mens persons, for in so doing we should commit sin, as saith the Apostle; and let men consider what it is in them that cannot bear with it, it being done in simplicity of heart upon this account.

(Penington, *Brief Account*)

Bauman has also made the point about the Quaker use of 'thou' and 'thee', in *Let Your Words be Few*, that although not designed as a badge of identity, it was an effective means of identification of members of the sect by both Quakers and non-Quakers (Bauman, pp.53-4). He goes on to argue that 'Although the hostility and violence visited upon them for their use of the plain speech imposed an often severe burden upon the early Quakers, the suffering they experienced thereby also had a strongly reinforcing effect on individual faith and group solidarity' (pp.7-8) so that 'the adoption of these usages came very clearly to represent a kind of self-induced rite of passage, marking one's 'coming out' as a Quaker' (pp.51,53).

¹⁶⁴ For a discussion of Quaker arguments about the grammar involved, see Bauman, pp.48-9

The effect of demonstrating difference from the rest of society through such social and linguistic rules was, naturally, for Quakers to be recognised and supported by those within the group and, at least initially, persecuted by those without (Worrall, p.7). Their refusal to greet those they passed casually, to remove their hats, or to speak respectfully were regarded at first as at best rude, and at worst subversive. Roger Williams' approving comment in his *Key into the Language of America* on the Narragansett Indians that they are 'as apt to salute as resalute' demonstrates how important such markers were in judging friendliness and social standing in contemporary society.¹⁶⁵ It was customary for the social inferior to greet their betters respectfully when passing; to refuse to do so marked out Quakers as rebellious and radical, despite their protests that they only wished to avoid vanity and superficial social forms (Selleck, p.4).

With their emphasis on the ability of spontaneous spoken words in the pulpit to bring listeners to salvation, Puritanism was also very aware of the power of language (Kibbey, pp.7-8). Bauman notes that many religious movements adopt a cultural style (p.23), but I would argue that Puritanism and Quakerism laid a particularly strong emphasis on language, and on a very noticeable use of language to define their religious allegiances. This is one of the similarities which made Puritanism so threatened by Quakerism; the newer group usurped their own ways of constructing and validating group identity.

In short, Quakers recognised the power and the potential and the danger of language. They used it to identify themselves both within their own group and to others, and in some ways they thought about it and used it in ways which their Puritan opponents did not. First, however, I want to look at one specific aspect of Quaker identity which had an enormous effect on the dispute over Quakers in New England; the fact that unlike the Praying Indians discussed in the previous chapter, the Quakers were questioning and threatening the Puritan establishment from an entirely new direction: from within.

A Threat from Within

Selleck has commented that part of the explanation for the levels of violence and hatred which emerged in the conflict between Quakers and Puritans in New England was the fact that their beliefs and culture were in fact very similar, that their dispute was in effect 'a family quarrel and thus all the more bitter' (p.8). Not only did both sects emerge from the same branch of radical Protestantism, Quaker converts included those who had previously been Congregational Calvinists, some – like Mary Dyer – having even lived previously in New England. Although there were differences in their beliefs, as will be discussed in the next section, they were in many ways very similar in their shared

¹⁶⁵ Roger William, *A Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643) p.1

rejection of dead forms and ceremony. Their real points of difference were how far they took this rejection of ceremony, and the Quaker belief in an inner light which represented Christ's existence in each believer.

At the same time, early Quakers could be identified as a potentially corrupting force emanating from England via various places, including Barbados, New Netherland and Rhode Island, and colonial strategies to combat Quakerism revolved around keeping the sect's adherents out of New England. Quakers were then, for the Massachusetts authorities, both insiders and outsiders. Myles has pointed out that Mary Dyer, in particular, fitted this dual status: although a Quaker, she had never been excommunicated from her church in Boston, and was a high-status woman in colonial society; as a result, she could symbolically speak from within Puritan society as well as without (Myles, 12). It was this combination of similarity and difference which formed the basis for much of the debate over identity surrounding the executions of the Quakers in Massachusetts. In their writings on the dispute, Massachusetts authorities attempted to dissociate themselves from the Quakers, to classify them as a group more related to heretical sects than to radical Puritanism. The Quakers, on the other hand, lamented the fact that Massachusetts Puritanism had set off in the right path and then failed to live up to its promise, portraying their adversaries as backsliders and spiritual failures.

The consequences of this similarity were profound. Quaker writers disputed with their Puritan opponents and called on the people of New England to repent using much of the same rhetoric and religious imagery as the Puritan ministers and authorities themselves. Whether consciously or not, the Quakers appropriated elements of the New England narrative, and thereby undermined the Puritan view of their own identity and place in the world. The violence of the Puritan authorities' reaction to the Quakers can be seen to be partly due to a fear of having their religious identity appropriated by this new wave of reforming radicals.

So, for example, consider the following quotation:

*We may appear like the fine Gold which is tried in the fire, to shine forth in the image of the Father as lights to the world, and as Cities set on a Hill which cannot be hid, so will the Lord have praise to whom it is due, by our upright walking and honest conversation.*¹⁶⁶

This is not from John Winthrop's famous sermon *A Model of Christian Charity*, but from a letter written by Marmaduke Stephenson, a Quaker facing execution, and printed after his death in an attempt to publicly shame and accuse the authorities who had condemned him. This quotation is significant for at least two reasons: one is that it uses the same Biblical text, Matthew 5.14-5, as had been used by

¹⁶⁶ Marmaduke Stephenson, *A Call from Death to Life* (London, 1660) p.28

Winthrop to discuss the future of the colonies thirty years before; another is the belief expressed that 'upright walking and honest conversation' would be a witness for Quakerism and bring glory to God.

The first point is the one I wish to focus on to begin with. That the rhetoric was so similar to Winthrop's assertion 'we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill' can, almost certainly, be put down to the aptness of the biblical text rather than a deliberate attempt to appropriate the imagery of thirty years earlier. But the similarity is striking, nevertheless, and is suggestive of the ways in which Quaker rhetoric was drawn from the same concerns and cultural ideas and religious language as the Puritan authorities attempting to combat them.

However, there is also a difference in tone between Marmaduke Stevenson and Winthrop. Although Winthrop begins by talking hopefully, as does Stevenson, about the ways in which the behaviour of his group will be looked upon as a shining good example for mankind – 'He shall make us a praise and a glory that men shall say of succeeding plantations, 'the Lord make it like that of NEW ENGLAND'' – and although traditionally this is the aspect of the quotation that historians and critics have emphasised, Winthrop goes on to be much more pessimistic, in a way that Robinson is not. For Winthrop, the visibility of their new colony is not a matter of pride but of danger:

For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us, so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world. We shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God, and all professors for God's sake. We shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us till we be consumed out of the good land whither we are going.¹⁶⁷

Although Winthrop mentions the possibility of them being a good example, this is overshadowed by the time he devotes to the dangers of them becoming a bad example; with a strong light shone on their every action by public attention, 'the eyes of all people [...] upon us', they cannot afford to fail, and become 'a story and a by-word through the world'.¹⁶⁸

This emphasis on the dangers of publicity suggests a culture which was acutely self-conscious, constantly aware of being watched and judged from the other side of the Atlantic. Furthermore, this is a culture which believes that not only would their enemies 'speak evil of the ways of God' if they had

¹⁶⁷ John Winthrop, 'A Model of Christian Charity', reprinted in Perry Miller ed., *The American Puritans: Their Prose and Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956) 79-84, p.83

¹⁶⁸ In this argument I am in agreement with Bozeman, who argues that the migrating colonists were more afraid of being a bad example than they were of settling in New England in order to provide a good one. Bozeman, pp.90-113

the chance, but that their friends and fellow believers, 'God's worthy servants', would be shamed and turn their prayers into curses on them if they brought their beliefs into question and disrepute.

This suggestion of paranoia and a belief in themselves as being the centre of attention, the focus of the narrative, can be traced through the whole history of seventeenth-century New England. Such paranoia must have been increased by the actions of dissidents such as Roger Williams, who successfully appealed to the higher authority of the English government for support and protection for Rhode Island against the colonial authorities. Furthermore, as van Zandt argues, trade links with England were crucial for the New England settlements: 'the essential truth that colonies could survive only through their connections with other communities, including those with people of other cultures.'¹⁶⁹ Such considerations must have fed the paranoia which appears from the very beginning, as in Winthrop's sermon; as a result, the idea of an English audience awaiting their chance to turn on the colonies appears frequently in New England texts.

And here the Quaker understanding of the Puritan mindset and indeed sharing it came into play in the ways in which they attempted to undermine and attack colonial Puritan culture in their written texts. Because they shared the sense of being on show – their behaviour a walking testament to their inner spiritual salvation or degradation – and because they were aware that the Puritan colonial establishment was sensitive to suggestions that those across the Atlantic were critical of them, Quaker polemicists understood how effective a weapon the suggestion might be that the actions of the colonial authorities were being watched and disapproved of from across the Atlantic. Since the colonies relied on mercantile and family links across the Atlantic, as Atlanticist historians have argued recently, and since the colonies were fiercely jealous of their practical political and social independence from England, the threat of condemnation and interference from the other side of the Atlantic also had potential economic, political and social repercussions.

As a result, Quaker text after Quaker text plays on Puritan fears of the world watching and disapproving. One good example is from a pamphlet by Isaac Penington:

That in *New-England* there hath been a Law made of banishing the *Quakers* (so called) and of death in case of return, is well known in these parts; but what induced them hereunto, & what just Grounds and Reasons they had for it, many are not acquainted with, but are very much dissatisfied concerning their proceedings therein, fearing that they have dishonoured God, brought a reproach upon the Name of Christ and his Gospel, exceeded the limits of their power, given an ill example of Persecution, laid a foundation for hardening their hearts against God, and of drawing his heavy wrath upon them, all of

¹⁶⁹ Cynthia van Zandt, *Brothers Among Nations: The Pursuit of Intercultural Alliances in Early America, 1580-1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) pp.4, 86-115

which they cannot but be deeply guilty of, in case it should be proved that they have been mistaken, and that these people (upon further search) should appear to be of God.¹⁷⁰

Similarly, Francis Howgill thundered that 'the blood-thirsty cruelty and Barbarous actions and inhumane acts of cruelty, and the noisome smell, and a bad example have you given to the World, and the Laws and appointments and orders of that General Court of *Boston* and *New England* stinkes in the Nostrils of all sober People, which is founded throughout the World' (p.4). Robert Wilson in *An Appendix* claimed that

You are gone so far in your *Cruelties* and *unnatural Actions*, that you are a *Stink* and a *loathsom Smell* to all People, that have the least measure of uprightness and of the honest Principle ruling in them, and your barbarous and bloody actions and cruel deeds they abhor, and at your Cruelty that you have acted against the People of the Lord (who are by you in scorn called *Quakers*) many of the common sort of People do stand amazed and wonder to hear of such Cruelty to be acted by such a Generation of men, that have made such a noise concerning Religion [...] it doth astonish many that are called *Heathens*.

(*An Appendix*, pp.188-9)

More specifically, Penington wrote of the harsh punishments meted out to Quakers, which he claimed were toned down in official colonial apologia for their actions:

2. *These lesser punishments of the house of correction, and imprisonment for a time having been inflicted on some of them, but not sufficing to deter or keep them away. (Why do you omit cutting off of ears? are ye ashamed to mention that amongst the rest? indeed the remembrance of it strikes upon the Spirits of people here, and perhaps in New-England also.)*

(*An Examination*, p.4)

And all this seems to have had an effect. Edward Rawson, who published an official *Declaration of the General Court* in defence of the authorities' actions, explained the need to publish the broadside by complaining that

although the justice of our proceedings against *William Robinson*, *Marmaduke Stephenson*, and *Mary Dyer*, supported by the Authority of this Court, the Lawes of the Country; and the Law of God, may rather perswade us to expect incouragement and

¹⁷⁰ Isaac Penington, *An Examination of the Grounds or Causes, Which are said to induce the Court of Boston in New-England to make that Order or Law of Banishment upon pain of Death against the Quakers* (London, 1660) p.1

commendation from all prudent and pious men, then convince us of any necessity to Apologize for the same, yet for as much as men of weaker parts, out of pitty and commiseration (a commendable and Christian virtue yet easily abused, and susceptible of sinister and dangerous impressions) for want of full information, may be less satisfied, and men of perverser principles, may take occasion hereby to calumniate us, and render us as bloody persecutors¹⁷¹

The broadside was printed by order in New England, and also published as *A True Relation of the Proceedings against certain QUAKERS, at the generall Court of the Massachusetts holden at Boston in New-England, October 18. 1659* (London, 1660). The Massachusetts authorities were clearly aware of criticism from the other side of the Atlantic as their Quaker adversaries were to claim it for themselves, and were taking steps to put their side of the story to the English public in an attempt to defend their reputations from Quaker propaganda.

Unlike other attacks on the particular form of the Puritan identity which predominated in New England – attacks by Anglicans or Catholics, for example – the Quaker criticisms were based not on the idea that their beliefs, moral structure and form of worship were inherently wrong, but (although there were some differences in structure which they disagreed on) mostly on the claim that the New Englanders had failed to live up to their earlier promise. They depicted them as having started out sincerely in the right path, and then having fallen by the wayside. This enabled Quakers to take on the role of Old Testament prophets, calling fallen Israel to repentance. Some Quaker writers emphasised how far they had fallen in their movement from conscience-stricken migrants to authoritarian persecutors: 'Was ever the like heard before, That men Professing to have so much of the Knowledge of God, and Professing to Fear God, that *such* should become so Bloody!' (*An Appendix*, p.181); while Penington argued that

In that they testified against the Bishops, they did well: but if they will now set up a stand, either to themselves or others, and not follow the leadings of the Lamb, their life may be withered, and they may perish in the Wilderness, while others are following the guide which they left, (when they set up their stand) towards *Canaan*.

(*An Examination*, p.51)

Sacvan Bercovitch argues that the Jeremiad form was a way of protecting colonial identity, a way for the colonists to reassure themselves that God only punished those he loved in order to reform them, and that therefore difficulties and trials were a proof of their chosen status. Penington here attempts to do the opposite, and to attack the colonial Puritan sense of themselves as a gathered people of the

¹⁷¹ Edward Rawson, *A Declaration of the General Court and the Massachusetts Holden at Boston in New-England, October 18. 1659* (New-England, 1659) one-page broadside

Lord. Instead of being unique and special, the colonists are depicted as only one people among many: in the past, they may have been special, in the vanguard of the escape out of Babylon; but now they have refused to move further and the Quakers have taken up their previous place in the journey towards Canaan. No longer a uniquely Chosen people, the Puritan place in Christian history is rewritten to be one more in a series of reforms which never quite go far enough, a rhetorical stance which they had previously used against the established church of England. It must have been particularly galling to colonial Puritans to have their own arguments now used against them; this was presumably the Quaker intention. Furthermore, as has been discussed above, this argument also took place during the linked cultural and religious debate over church membership which led to the Halfway Covenant and an acceptance that not all children of the congregational “saints” would naturally become saints themselves, as had previously been assumed. The arguments over whether to insist on keeping church congregations pure, or whether to open them to a wider membership, must have made accusations from the Quakers that they were no longer a uniquely chosen people particularly bitter.

Other Quaker writers attacked the dominant New England narrative of their own history and place in God’s plan by claiming that their migration, which the colonists saw as a cruel exile from their English homeland, was in fact the *cause* of their having fallen away from God. Isaac Pennington gave his argument an appearance of impartiality by beginning ‘That there was an honest intent in many of them, in transplanting into *New-England*, I do not doubt [...]’ but he then went on to rewrite the whole Puritan narrative of how it was that they came to relocate to New England:

whether they had a sufficient warrant from God to transplant, was doubted and objected against them, by many of their conscientious fellow sufferers here in old *England*, who testifie them that they did believe it to be their duty not to fly, but stay and bear their testimony for God and his truth by suffering

(*An Examination*, p.51)

In one stroke, Quaker polemicists rewrote history. Not only was the move to Massachusetts a flight rather than an exile, but they suggest that many observers thought so at the time, that this accusation was not only a matter of hindsight. This was particularly effective because many of those who had made the decision to migrate had worried over whether in doing so, they were abandoning England, and making its destruction more likely. This was especially so in the case of those who settled Massachusetts Bay, who had not wanted to have to explicitly separate from the Church of England. Winthrop, for example, only persuaded himself the migration was the right step when he came to

believe that it was an act of saving a remnant of the godly from inevitable destruction, rather than an act of flight.¹⁷²

And more than just attempting to undermine the colonial narrative of their own past, Quaker writers consistently claimed that this was the reason for the colonists' fall from People of the Lord to 'bloody persecutors'. Francis Howgill argued that 'There was something amongst some of you, but you fled the Cross as I told you before, and so that spirit that persecuted you in the Bishops time got up in your selves, and that which once you had while you were under affliction here, you have lost, not only the Power of godliness but the Form thereof' (Howgill, p.34). Isaac Pennington also pinpointed the change from godly to persecutors as being the moment when the colonists left England:

Consider whether you did not flee from the Cross, in your transplanting into *New-England*, and so let up that part in you there, which should have been kept down by the Cross here, and gave advantage to that spirit to get ground in you, which ye outwardly fled from? The safety is in standing in Gods council, in bearing the Cross, in suffering for the testimony of his truth: but if at any time there be a fleeing of the Cross (whether the inward or the outward) without God's direction, the evil spirit is thereby let in, his part strengthened, and the life weakened. That spirit which would save itself from the Cross, is the same with that which would persecute that which will not save itself.

(*An Examination*, pp.45-6)

The decision to migrate to New England had set the colonists apart in narratives of their own history, had set them on the path to developing a new identity in New England, and had been one of the most important and decisive experiences in the lives of most of those who had made a trip. This was the decision that the Quaker writers were attacking, and claiming to have been the moment when their religion became hypocrisy and they turned their backs on Christ. The New England colonies were by their very definition, according to these Quaker writers, enemies of true believers.

So when Francis Howgill warned his New England readers that 'Nations do hisse at you; what, ye a gathered People? what ye a separated People?' (p.38) he may not have been alluding directly to Winthrop's fear, quoted above, that if the colonies failed to keep to the true path then '[w]e shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us.' But Howgill shared the culture of Winthrop's speech, and understood that it was built on a belief that the New England colonies were a new Canaan, a place where the chosen few would be protected by the Lord. In attacking this belief, he was doing his best to undermine what he saw as the misplaced religious arrogance of the colonists and their belief that they were doing God's will, when in

¹⁷² Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop* (New York: Longman, 1999; first published 1969) pp.40-2

fact they had become corrupt and were now persecuting the Quaker prophets who were trying to warn them of their spiritual danger.

Usurping Colonial Narratives

One reason the Quaker writers were successful in their attacks on the colonial Puritan idea of themselves as a chosen people was their ability to create a narrative around their place in the colonies, both through their actions, and in their written texts. In contrast, the colonial authorities were on the defensive, reacting to Quaker claims and defending themselves and their actions. Why were Quaker narratives so much more effective than those of the Puritan authorities, given that they had previously had few difficulties in dealing with dissent from Roger Williams and the Antinomians? One significant element is the fact discussed above, that the Puritan authorities suddenly discovered that their narratives of themselves, their origins and their place in God's plan had been usurped. Their whole depiction of their own identities had been based on the idea that they were a conscientious, victimised, exiled people, struggling to survive in the wilderness; and suddenly, they discovered that this was the role that the Quakers had claimed for themselves, with the Puritan colonial authorities being cast in the role previously filled by the Anglican bishops. Colonial narratives still emphasised how they had been forced to leave their lives and wealth for the sake of conscience – for example, the appeal addressed to Charles II at the Restoration:

That we might therefore enjoy Divine Worship without humane mixtures; without offence either to God or man, or our own consciences; we with leave (but not without Tears) departed from our Country, Kindred and Fathers house, into this Pathmos; in relation whereunto we do not say, Our Garments are become old, by reason of the very long Journey, but that ourselves, who came away in our strength, are by reason of very long absence, many of us become grey-headed, and some of us stooping for age.

(Humble Petition, p.7)

But although they here emphasise their long exile and the hardships they had faced when they tore themselves away from their homes, even expressing the hope that the King 'knoweth the heart of Exiles, who himself hath been an exile' (p.4), Charles II did not find them convincing, and initially at least supported the Quakers rather than the Puritan colonial government. This can be largely ascribed to the fact that the colonial self-depiction as poor exiles was no longer very convincing: the colonies were becoming settled and established, and important enough for the King to be as keen to regain control over them as they were to avoid him doing so. This suggests another reason why Charles II initially supported the Quakers in the dispute; it gave him a way to assert his power over Massachusetts and the other colonies. The historian Worrall points out that Massachusetts was in a

delicate political position due to its support of the commonwealth during the Interregnum: 'it would do Massachusetts little good to hang Quakers if by so doing it was to enhance its record of harboring and sympathizing with regicides' (p.13).

In short, part of the reason for the ineffectiveness of the Puritan polemic defending themselves and attacking their Quaker opponents was the fact that colonial writers suddenly found themselves without a believable narrative to use. The historian Chu sees it as ironic that '[t]he reaction of Massachusetts Puritans was also similar to that of church and civil authorities who had driven them from England'; I will argue that this was not in fact an ironic twist of fate, but a deliberate Quaker strategy to undermine Puritan narratives of themselves and to challenge Puritan religious authority in the region (Chu, 45). The Puritans' previous depictions of themselves as victims and exiles was directly countered by Quaker insistence that they had now become the persecutors; and it was indisputable that, within the colonies at least, they were now the ones in a position of power, with physical, political and legal control.

Interpretation

As this discussion of the role of narrative suggests, the dispute between Puritans and Quakers in colonial New England was a war which put great emphasis on words. Although they levied charges and counter-charges of falsehood and misrepresentation at each other, especially in relation to matters of doctrine, in reality the dispute between the Puritans and Quakers in colonial New England was a matter of interpretation, rather than disputation, of the facts. Although the situation was tense with violence real and feared, at its heart the conflict was a propaganda battle. And although the Massachusetts authorities accused the Quakers of heresy and blasphemy, and the Quakers accused the Massachusetts authorities of murder and persecution, in practice they were in agreement about almost all the events which took place and words which were spoken. Their contention came with their inability to agree on how to interpret these events. Were the Massachusetts authorities bloody persecutors, or were the Quakers damned heretics? One Quaker text demonstrates this concentration on interpretation; it begins by affirming 'That in New-England there hath been a Law made of banishing the Quakers (so called) and of death in case of return, is well known in these parts; but what induced them hereunto, & what just Grounds and Reasons they had for it, many are not acquainted with, but are very much dissatisfied concerning their proceedings therein' (*An Examination*, p.1). Similarly, the official Massachusetts broadside explaining the Quaker executions claimed that

although the justice of our proceedings against William Robinson, Marmaduke Stephenson, and Mary Dyer, supported by the Authority of this Court, the Lawes of the

Country; and the Law of God, may rather perswade us to expect encouragement and commendation from all prudent and pious men, then convince us of any necessity to Apologize for the same, yet for as much as men of weaker parts, out of pitty and commiseration (a commendable and Christian virtue yet easily abused, and susceptible of sinister and dangerous impressions) for want of full information, may be less satisfied, and men of perverser principles, may take occasion hereby to calumniate us, and render us as bloody persecutors, to satisfie the one, and stop the mouths of the other, we thought it requisite to declare [...]

(Rawson, *A Declaration*)

Both sides were also agreed on the central issue requiring interpretation: were the Quakers dangerous heretics come to attack Massachusetts' godly experiment; or were they the equivalent of Old Testament prophets, come to sting awake the conscience of erring Israel? Both sides, of course, believed themselves to be carrying out the will of God in their attacks, verbal or physical, on the other side; but each side could only justify their actions through reference to intangible and unprovable ideas of spirituality, morality and belief. As the Quaker writer Isaac Penington put it, 'as for an *erring conscience*, there lies the dispute, whose conscience errs, yours or theirs' (*An Examination*, p.67).

The many texts written about the controversy all attempt, then, to present their own interpretation of the same words and events, in order to support their argument that their beliefs and motivations are the right ones. They face many of the same difficulties already discussed in the previous chapter, and which had been an issue in Puritan colonial culture since at least the debate over Anne Hutchinson's spiritual claims, in their attempt to argue about intangible questions of belief and spiritual experience in a language rooted in traditional cultural ideas and rhetoric, and in the context of powerful social prejudices which conditioned thinking about identity.

By their Words and Fruits

'Does not Christ say, *By their words the false prophets are known, and the Tree is known by its fruits?* And have not you brought forth the same fruits?'

(Howgill, p.5)

Having outlined some of the ways in which Quaker identity had developed to become a significant challenge to Puritan conceptions of their own identity earlier in the chapter, I now want to look at the specific ways in which they and the Puritan authorities attempted to use language and rhetoric in order to reveal their opponents as hypocrites. As discussed in the previous chapter, the reason hypocrisy was a problem for Puritans was that they were attempting to judge an invisible inner state

entirely through reference to outer appearance, words and actions; as a result they were very wary of situations when appearance and reality did not correspond, as Tichi argues.¹⁷³ Congregational Calvinists had already found this to be a problem when deciding whether or not to admit aspiring members of the congregation to full church membership, but they had managed to develop a system of signs whereby they could make some attempt to judge who showed signs of being redeemed – which in practice meant that they kept some control over dissent within the church by only admitting those who seemed likely to agree with their principles.¹⁷⁴

The Quakers, however, represented a new kind of challenge. As discussed, although they were almost always geographical outsiders, in the sense that most of them came from outside the colonies, they shared a viewpoint and many rhetorical strategies with the Puritan mainstream in New England. And they were as fully convinced that New England was putting up only a show of godliness and needed to be forced to admit to its own hypocrisy as the authorities were that these new radicals were putting on a show of godliness in order to mask their devilish desire to stir up trouble and rebellion, the latest attempt to pull down the godly experiment in New England. Both sides tried to use external signs to prove inner deceit; and both sides attempted this from a similar cultural background and using similar rhetorical tools. It was the Quakers, however, who won this propaganda war.

I have quoted a Quaker writer, Francis Howgill, at the beginning of this section, because although he is attacking the colonial authorities here, he is essentially expressing a similar idea to the Puritan writers of the period when they attacked Quakers. Both sides had faith that although it was impossible ever to truly know another human heart – only God could do that – nevertheless, God was not cruel enough to leave mankind entirely at the mercy of smooth plausible deceivers and then blame them for being convinced; instead, both sides had faith that there would be clues, that hypocrites must inevitably betray themselves at some point, so that there would be no excuse for being taken in by them. Howgill quotes the authority of Christ, that ‘By their words the false prophets are known, and the Tree is known by its fruits’; the inclusion of both words and fruits, the verbal and the signs picked up through observing actions and lives, is significant. Similarly, John Norton in his official defence of the colony against Quaker attacks noted that

Concerning hypocritical professors, God hereby discovers them, They went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us. I. John.2. 19. God in his own season, many times detects unsound professors, & church members, in this life: to shew that whatever name they had in the Churches which they lived in, yet they were never unseen

¹⁷³ Cecilia Tichi, “Thespis and the ‘Carnall hypocrite’: A Puritan Motive for Aversion to Drama” in *Early American Literature* 4.2 (1969) 86-103, p.96

¹⁷⁴ In this I am in agreement with Kamensky, p.5

to his alseeing eye. 2. *To make others afraid how they respond to his holy things in hypocrisy Acts 5.14* 3. *To prevent others being deceived by them.*¹⁷⁵

Norton sees three purposes in God revealing the hypocrite: to show his omniscience, to warn off potential hypocrites, and to protect others from being deceived. More concerned with the safety of the establishment than Howgill, with the possibility of 'unsound professors' infecting the church and leading to a decline in standards and leading the credible down the wrong path. Howgill, on the other hand, has a vision which is tied to the prophets of the Old Testament and the backslidings of Israel; his is a vision by an outsider crying out against the corrupt authorities.

Both sides, however, share a faith that false prophets and professors will be recognisable, although with an interesting difference of emphasis on how this will be discovered: Howgill puts the emphasis on human analysis of words and fruits, doctrine and behaviour; whereas Norton seems more to imagine that such offenders will be revealed by God, while mankind passively observes. This determination on the part of the Quaker writer to analyse the actions of the colonial authorities and portray them in print in order to convince readers, while Norton waits passively for a sign from God, can be seen to be one reason why the Quaker texts so quickly forced Massachusetts, apparently much more stable and powerful than the wandering Public Friends who were being persecuted in New England, onto the defensive. I will now go on to look at some of the rhetorical means by which Quaker writers actively tried to demonstrate that the words and fruits of Massachusetts were signs of hypocrisy; and finally look at some of the ways Massachusetts tried to interpret God's signs against their enemies, but with much less success.

Death and Authority

The first of these was the way Quaker writers turned the circumstances of the execution of four Quakers from being a blow struck against them by the Massachusetts authorities, to being a rhetorical weapon for themselves. They did this by making use of a shared cultural belief in the period in the importance of the deathbed and the words and behaviour of the dying.

Although Quaker writers claimed that the Puritan authorities argued '*That a Company of Thieves, Fornicators and Fellons may cry out of deserved punishment as Persecution as well as we*' (Howgill, p.6), this statement did not reflect the way in which European tradition had always linked words with the circumstances in which they were produced, in ways which allowed the Quakers to so narrate and

¹⁷⁵ John Norton, *The Heart of New-England rent at the BLASPHEMIES of the Present Generation. [...] By John Norton, Teacher of the Church of Christ at Boston. Who was appointed thereunto by the Order of the GENERAL COURT* (Cambridge, MA, 1659 [also London, 1660]) p.25

frame their attempts to 'cry out' that they were interpreted as martyrs rather than criminals by readers of their texts, and dominated the propaganda battle with the Puritans after the 1659-61 executions.

Words spoken in different situations have different levels of power and different circumstances can give speakers different levels of authority, as many linguistic theorists have pointed out. Some performative words, to use the term coined by JL Austin, have no effect unless spoken in the right time and place by the right person, to the right person: 'I now pronounce you husband and wife' is an obvious example.¹⁷⁶ This is an extreme example, bound up as it is with law and ceremony; there are, however, other examples of words gaining in importance and authority depending on who they are spoken by and in what circumstances.

One important example in the period, and the one which I want to argue is a crucial factor in the propaganda battle between Puritans and Quakers in New England, was the authority accorded by Europeans to words spoken by the dying. Deathbed speeches and accounts of the behaviour of the dying were a significant genre in the early modern period.¹⁷⁷ These deathbed narratives are significant for the way that they all follow a fairly conventional pattern, if not actually a set of rules, despite the fact that they represent the record of an unpredictable and deeply personal moment. Houlbrooke has argued that the most graphic deathbed narratives between the 1580s and the Restoration were associated with a broadly Puritan pattern, in which the dying person was central, a source of advice and comfort for those around them rather than a sinner needing confession and absolution, as in the Catholic model (*Death, Religion*, pp.165-7). Scholars have argued that dying was regarded as a moment of supreme trial in early modern culture; for Protestants it came to be seen as the moment in which your life was put to the test. If you died in fear or raving, or didn't fit the right pattern of expected behaviour, or were even simply unable to speak, it was taken to be a bad sign (*Death, Religion*, pp.130, 198-9). Other signs, however, were considered symptomatic of a good death – an idea which had been part of European culture since the Middle Ages, although the emphasis had changed after the Reformation, with less emphasis on priests and sacraments (*Death, Religion*, p.183).

While the Reformation ended belief in the efficacy of deathbed repentance for Protestants, the deathbed itself remained a place of spiritual trial. Houlbrooke sums up the seventeenth-century attitude to deathbeds usefully:

Protestants believed that each individual belonged to the ranks either of the elect or the damned. In this case, the outcome was not decided at a deep level by anything that happened on the deathbed, but this did not prevent the dying or those around them from

¹⁷⁶ JL Austin, *How To Do Things With Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965) pp.4-7

¹⁷⁷ Ralph Houlbrooke, 'The Puritan Death-bed, c.1560 – c.1660' in Durston, Christopher and Jacqueline Eales, eds, *The Culture of English Puritanism 1560 – 1700* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996) 122-144, p.140; David E. Stannard, *The Puritan Way of Death: A Study in Religion, Culture, and Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); Ralph Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England, 1480-1750* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998)

seeking assurance or suffering doubt. Protestant advice literature was largely designed to buttress the former and remove the latter. The comportment of the dying was very often interpreted as an indicator of their elect status. God had decreed their fates long before, yet it might only be in the last hour that his grace manifested itself in moving a sinner to repentance.

(*Death, Religion*, p.154)

While the fate of the dying had been decided long before, their behaviour at the point of death was used in an attempt to interpret what their fate would be, as well as providing an example to others of how to behave. As a result, Houlbrooke argues, 'The experience of death was probably the focus of more intense interest and scrutiny between the Reformation and the Enlightenment than at any time before or since' (*Death, Religion*, p.183). Deaths were scrutinised for signs considered to be hopeful or negative. If you died feeling hopeful and happy to be about to meet your maker, although stopping short of spiritual arrogance, it was generally regarded as a good sign. Patience and submission in suffering were generally considered important, as were dying prayers and happiness at the approach of death; scholars generally agree that Puritan culture in particular put great emphasis on the ability to speak coherently and both declare their own faith and exhort those around them to turn to God.¹⁷⁸

Numerous Protestant texts emphasised the situation of the dying man or woman, who could no longer change their fate, and could only cling to faith that they would be saved. Radical Puritans, like the Congregational Calvinists of New England, who regarded mankind as divided into the elect and the unregenerate, also regarded the behaviour of those on their deathbeds as (with all the usual caveats about never being able to second-guess the decisions of God) a good indication of whether they were truly saved or a hypocrite, discovered at last. As previously discussed, Quakers and Puritans had in common the belief that the Lord would not be so cruel as to give them no hints as to who the hypocrites were at all, and a belief in the significance events: for them, nothing was random, every event was a structured part of God's plan for the world (Stannard, pp.31-43).

But if the behaviour of a man, woman or child on their deathbed was regarded as the supreme test of religious faith and sincerity, the behaviour of the dying was also regarded as being an example for the living. Death was a social and cultural event, to the extent that Houlbrooke has argued that 'a private death was regarded as something of a misfortune; to choose it might be regarded as a perverse refusal of social and religious duties' (*Death, Religion*, pp.194-5). Collections of pious deaths, including those of the very young and the well-known, were portrayed as offering an example for readers, and must have contributed to people's knowledge of the words and actions expected of the dying. One of the missionary efforts of Eliot and Mayhew was the publication of *Dying Speeches of Several Indians*,

¹⁷⁸ Houlbrooke, 'Puritan Death-Bed', pp.127-140; Erik R. Seeman, "Reading Indians' Deathbed Scenes: Ethnohistorical and Representational Approaches" in *The Journal of American History* vol 88.1 (2001) 17-47, p.24

which epitomises this double purpose of providing a good example to other Praying Indians, and an attempt to demonstrate to English and New England readers the religious sincerity of the Native American Christians. Others used 'good deaths' to salvage reputations they had lost in life, particularly those criminals who repented before their executions.

Furthermore, the advice of the dying was taken seriously, and one of the common events at a deathbed was the bringing in of the family to let them hear the final advice of their dying friend or relative. It was customary to give serious moral advice to children, relatives and friends while dying. Such words had a special cultural authority: spoken from a liminal position between earth and heaven, when men saw more clearly, being already half loosed from the concerns of the flesh, and with the prospect of God's judgement and potential damnation before them creating a unique guarantee of truthfulness – or at least so contemporary listeners believed (Houlbrooke, 'Puritan Death-bed, p.140; *Death, Religion*, p.185). These culturally authoritative words were also unusually open to being spoken by those who were normally silenced in Puritan culture: in particular, women and children, although Native American voices were also valued, as is suggested by the collections of their dying words published by Eliot and Mayhew.¹⁷⁹

This combination of belief in the importance and truth of the words and actions of the dying, and of the extra respect given to the advice dispensed by them, was mostly applied to those dying slowly and quietly in bed – those who had sudden deaths, after all, had little chance to prepare for them. But there was another category, of those executed, which generally displayed a similar importance placed on the way people died. Large crowds would attend hangings, to find out how the executed would face their death; as a result, the actions and words of the man or woman on the scaffold would be put under just as intense scrutiny as those dying in their beds, although the expectations about their behaviour would be different (Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion*, p.25). The process of execution in Massachusetts was geared towards forcing the criminal to prepare for their end and repent, and so Houlbrooke notes that it was much more likely as a place of late repentance.

The scaffold was a far better publicized and documented site of late repentance than the deathbed in early modern England. The condemned person faced especially strong social pressures during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to confess and repent in public. The sentence of death confronted him with his crime and its consequences in particularly stark fashion. The prospect of certain death, usually faced when the malefactor was in full possession of his faculties, did indeed concentrate the mind much more effectively than an enfeebling terminal illness.

(*Death, Religion*, pp.213-4)

¹⁷⁹ John Eliot, *The Dying Speeches of several Indians* (Cambridge MA, 1685[?]); Experience Mayhew, *Indian Converts, or, Some account of the lives and dying speeches of a considerable number of the Christianized Indians of Martha's Vineyard, in New England* (London, 1727)

Often, the dying man or woman would confess their crimes and proclaim their repentance, throwing themselves on the mercy of the Lord and hoping for forgiveness; the Tudors began the tradition, introducing public confessions at executions for treason and other capital crimes.¹⁸⁰ Some, especially later in the seventeenth century and in the eighteenth century, refused to repent out of bravado; but neither the penitent or the unrepentant villain demanded that Puritan society question its own perceptions of morality, truth, or the justice of their laws, rather tending to reinforce them either through attacks or through an admission of guilt which reaffirmed the value of the society the criminal had previously undermined through their actions (*Death, Religion*, p.215).

Until the Quakers were sentenced to death for returning from banishment, there was nobody who challenged the system itself. The Quakers introduced a new category of death, something which had not previously occurred in New England, although it had a deep and resonant background in England and the English culture that had been imported into the colonies (*Death, Religion*, p.215). The Quakers sentenced to death succeeded in rewriting the narrative from the Puritan accusation that 'The Quakers died not because of their other Crimes how capital soever, but upon their superadded presumptuous and incorrigible contempt of Authority' (*Humble Petition*, p.6) to a new way of interpreting their deaths, using the imagery and language of martyrdom. To quote Houlbrooke:

There were always some condemned people who refused to repent, or who protested their innocence to the last. Protestant 'heretics' or Catholic 'traitors' turned execution rituals inside out, becoming martyrs in the eyes of their own communities. Some criminals were not to be awed by the threat of punishment and refused to play their expected part. Different interpretations of particular scaffold performances by the godly and their opponents further limited the integrative potential of last dying speeches.

(*Death, Religion*, p.215)

The Puritan deathbed was an inherently dramatic scene. Several critics, including Houlbrooke, refer to the dying as 'playing an active role in the drama of their own deathbeds' (*Death, Religion*, p.161). If that was the case, how much more dramatic and a situation, and how much more important the role, in a public execution in which the colonial authorities claimed the central figure to be a blasphemer, and he or she believed him- or herself to be a prophet of God dying as an act of witness? It is this self-consciously dramatic acting out of their own deaths that I wish to turn to now, with a discussion of the presentation of martyrdom in the texts.

¹⁸⁰ Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion*, p.412; David D. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1989) p.175

Martyrdom

Martyrdom was an issue with deep resonances in the seventeenth century. The recent history of Britain was scarred by the executions of Protestants and Catholics in the various twists and turns of power during the Reformation, and the Protestant cultural memory of this was deep and abiding. It was also articulated in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments of the English Martyrs*, which recorded the suffering, death and last words of those who had died for their Protestant faith. As a result, it had deep resonances for both Puritans and Quakers (Hall, p.121). Furthermore, due to its cultural authority, it created the narratives by which martyrs could identify themselves. Hall argues that '[I]n describing how to die a martyr's death, Foxe provided the vernacular tradition with a means of overturning the official meaning of an execution' (p.186).

Both Puritan New Englanders and Quakers saw themselves as martyr-figures. The Puritans had built up a narrative of themselves as poor exiles, driven from their homes and into the wilderness for the sake of conscience. As I have argued, the Quakers now took on that role and rewrote the narrative to make themselves the victims and the colonial authorities the new persecutors, the successors to the bishops.

But the Quaker writers who reported the whippings, brandings and particularly the executions in New England also made use of the cultural authority given to the words of those enduring suffering or death, in order to gain a rhetorical victory over their Puritan adversaries. The Puritan authorities had clearly hoped to do so as well, because both sides had in common their viewing of the executions as the ultimate test. The Puritan authorities hoped that sentencing Quakers to banishment upon pain of death would act as a deterrent: as Edward Rawson put it, 'we desire their lives absent, rather than their deaths present' (*A Declaration*). And even when it came to the executions, they seem to have hoped that the Quakers would fail the test, and beg for their lives in exchange for mercy: in 'a Letter From a Stranger to his Friend, touching the Death of *W. Leddra*,' the "stranger" reports that 'The People of the Town told me, he [Leddra] might go away if he would; but when I made further Enquiry, I heard the *Marshal* say, *That he was chained in Prison from the time he was Condemned to the day of his Execution.*' Although this man seems to have thought that he had been misled by the people, this could also be read as there having been an understanding that Leddra had only to renounce his views, or even renounce his determination to preach them in Massachusetts, and he would be able to save his own life.

In this sense, then, the executions were seen as a test, and one in which the Quakers triumphed. Public executions were a dramatic spectacle, in which justice was seen to be acted out on the body of the criminal, but there was also the possibility of the condemned playing their role in such a way as to turn the significance of the occasion around. The body of the person to be executed was of crucial

significance, as Myles argues, with the magistrates hoping that its fate would act as a public example, while Quakers hoped to make it evidence of the magistrates' persecution (Myles, p.14). This recalls Tichi's argument that Puritans saw the drama of God's plot of human redemption as overshadowing the hypocrisy of theatrical fictions (Tichi, pp.86-103).

If the Puritan authorities were aware of the ritual drama of the execution scene, the Quakers exploited it to the full. The colonial authorities attempted to use the figure of Dyer standing with a rope around her neck before she was reprieved to be a vivid warning to Quakers and their potential converts, but Dyer and the other executed Quakers were successfully able to use the drama and, above all, the *performative* nature of the situation to change the ways in which their deaths were interpreted by observers.¹⁸¹ Although physically imprisoned, the Quakers due to be executed were able to change the significance of their own deaths through their behaviour and appearance as they approached the gallows. As Myles comments of Dyer, 'she presented her own martyred body as the ultimate text and grounds of interpretation' (p.12).

Quakerism can be seen to have always had an element of drama in its insistence on the performative. Kamensky emphasises this, arguing that 'Quaker missionaries and their converts often turned speech into spectacle' and 'substituted their own brand of theater for the Puritan oratory they despised' (p.120). Similarly, Bauman argues that 'the early Quakers' distrust of speaking as susceptible to worldly corruption made them ready to rely on other codes and channels, including physical action, for communicative purposes' (p.85). While Bauman is discussing here the Quaker practice of breaking down the barrier between literalness and metaphor in specifically non-ritual contexts such as the infamous 'going naked for a sign', his discussion of the practice of Quaker signs through 'the public performance of shocking, dramatic actions, intended to convey, by nonverbal means, an expression of moral reproof and/or prophecy' seems applicable as well to the behaviour of the Quakers faced with execution (p.84). Similarly, he highlights Fox's demand to his followers to 'Let the truth speak in all things', and to 'Let your lives speak' (Bauman, p.26) This emphasis on the ways in which behaviour could act as a guarantee of internal truth is crucial to the understanding of what the executed Quaker 'martyrs' were trying to achieve by their deaths. But, as Myles points out, the dramatic needs of both the colonial authorities and the Quakers who wanted to be seen as martyrs demanded the death of the central figure as the narrative climax (Myles, pp.8-10).

According to Quaker texts – and the silence on the subject in Puritan texts suggests that they had no contrary evidence to produce – the behaviour of all four executed Quakers earned the respect of the crowd, and even some non-Quakers identified them as looking like people acting with God's support: the allegedly neutral "stranger" quoted above in the Quaker text *An Appendix* wrote to his friend after Leddra's death that 'I am not of his Opinion: but yet truly me thought the Lord did mightily appear in

¹⁸¹ On Dyer's mock-execution, see Selleck, p.13; Pestana, p.33; Chu, p.47

the man...' Furthermore, according to the same writer, 'when I was in the Town, some did seem to sympathize with me in my Grief' at Leddra's execution (*An Appendix*, pp.197-8).¹⁸² This all suggests that the executions had the opposite effect on at least some of the watchers to that which the colonial authorities had intended; instead of revealing Quaker hypocrisy, it gave them a chance to demonstrate their faith through their ability to withstand suffering and hardship.

It should be noted that there is some evidence that these displays did not persuade colonial audiences: Chu notes that the only evidence outside Quaker texts about colonial attitudes was a petition given to the General Court by residents, demanding that they be *less* lenient with Quakers, and asking for a law of banishment on pain of death to be passed.¹⁸³ However, whether this represents the views of a vocal minority or a general consensus in the colony, there is no doubt that at least some of the inhabitants of the Bay Colony were converted to Quakerism; and it is also incontrovertible that after all their efforts in silencing Quakers in the colony, the authorities gave them a platform and a higher degree of cultural authority for their final words by giving them public deaths, although Quaker claims that during at least one execution, the authorities used drums to drown any words the condemned men might speak on the way to the gallows suggests that they were aware of the dangers of this (Stephenson, pp.31-2). The historian Pestana, indeed, notes that

The ritual traditionally associated with executions in the colony had to be altered on this occasion, since the prisoners were not penitent and could not be expected to confess their errors with their last breaths. Indeed, these self-styled martyrs threatened to turn the imagery of public execution on its head by presenting themselves as the Lord's faithful servants who went to their deaths joyously. The dying words of the two men, as well as the heckling of the spectators, was drowned out by the beating of drums.

(p.34)

In order to examine in more detail the idea that the Quaker writers consciously made use of the cultural significance of martyrdom, I want to look more closely at the depictions of their deaths written by Quaker observers. I will argue that Mary Dyer, Marmaduke Stephenson, William Robinson and William Leddra consciously used the opportunity offered by their staged deaths, and the Quakers who described events deliberately framed their descriptions, in such a way as to place them in the tradition of English martyrology and the cultural model of giving great significance to the words of the dying. I will demonstrate this through reference to the ways in which they present themselves or their subjects, and also the way that there are significant parallels with the descriptions of martyrdoms in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments of the English Martyrs*. Whether this was deliberately conscious or a matter of different things emerging out of the same cultural atmosphere, it will demonstrate one of the

¹⁸² Evidently, this claim of neutrality in a Quaker text is extremely suspect; but, if nothing else, it does at least demonstrate to us that this was the effect on the crowd that the Quakers hoped to achieve and thought would impress readers

¹⁸³ *Petition for More Stringent Laws on Quakers*, October 1658, Mass. Archives 10:246, quoted in Chu, p.41

ways in which Quakers attempted to use cultural narratives and rhetoric in order to promote their cause and undermine the position of their opponents.

Foxe, of course, was also writing propaganda, to ensure that those who had died for Protestantism were remembered as martyrs rather than heretics, and their Catholic adversaries as bloodthirsty rather than enforcing the law. Both his and the Quakers' accounts of the deaths of their martyrs are hugely dramatic and violent, intended to enlist the sympathy and empathy of the reader and to shock and fascinate them. The accounts of the deaths by the Puritan authorities attempt to do the exact opposite, playing down the situation to make it as dull and a legal, rather than a moral, matter. To see just how huge the difference in accounts was in representation, although entirely similar in facts, consider the following descriptions:

The first is the famous account of the deaths of Latimer and Ridley, from Foxe:

Then they brought a Faggot, kindled with fire, and laid the same down at D. *Ridleys* feet. To whom Mr. Latimer spoke in this manner; Be of good comfort, Mr Ridley, and play the man, we shall this day light such a candle by Gods grace in *England* as I trust shall never be put out.

And so the fire being given unto them, when Doctor *Ridley* saw the fire flaming up towards him, he cryed with a wonderful lowd voyce; *In manos suos, Domine, commendo spiritum meum: Domine recipe spiritum meum*, and after repeated this later part often in English, Lord, Lord, receive my spirit: Master *Latimer* crying as vehemently on the other side, O Father of Heaven, receive my Soul: who received the flame as it were embracing of it. After that he had stroked his face with his hands, and as it were bathed them a little in the fire, he soon died (as it appeareth) with very little pain or none. [...]

However it was, surely it moved hundreds to tears, in beholding the horrible sight. For I think there was none, that had not clean exiled all humanity and mercy, which would not have lamented to behold the fury of the fire so to rage upon their bodies. Signs there were of sorrow on every side. [...] Well, dead they are, and the reward of this world they have already. What reward remaineth for them in heaven, the day of the Lords glory, when he cometh with his Saints, shall shortly I trust, declare.¹⁸⁴

The next source is taken from *A Call from Death to Life*, a collection of the writing and accounts of the trials and deaths of William Robinson, Marmaduke Stephenson, and the actions of Mary Dyer.

¹⁸⁴ John Fox (*sic*), The Third Volume of the Ecclesiastical History: Containing the Acts and Monuments of Martyrs (London, 1684) Vol 3, book 10, p.431. All future references to Foxe are from this edition, volume and book.

And when they were come to the Ladders foot, they took their leave each of other and W.R. stept up the ladder and spoke to the People, saying this is the day of your visitation wherein the Lord hath visited you, this is the day the Lord is arisen in his mighty Power to be revenged on all his adversaries, and the rope being about his neck, as he spake the executioner bound his legs and hands, and his neck cloth being tyed around his face, he said now ye are made manifest; so the executioner being about to turn him off the Ladder, he uttered this expression, saying, I suffer for Christ in whom I live, and for whom I die; So he being turned off, M.S. went up and spake to the people, saying, Be it known unto all this day that we suffer not as evil doers but for Conscience sakes; then being bound according to the former manner, as the Executioner was about to turn him off the Ladder, he uttered these words, saying, this day shall we be at rest with the Lord; Thus the Faithful witnesses sealed their Testimony for the Lord against the Dragons power, and blessedly departed with praises in their mouthes, entering joyfully with their beloved into Everlasting Rest.

Written in *Plimmoth Prison* in *New England*, the 6th. of the 10th. moneth, 1659.

Peter Pearson.

(Stephenson, p.32)

Finally, consider the account of the hangings put out by the Massachusetts authorities:

[S]entence [of banishment on pain of death] being regularly announced at the last court of Assistants against the partie above named, and they either returning, or continuing presumptuously in this Jurisdiction, after the time limited, were apprehended, & owning themselves to be the persons banished, were sentenced (by the Court) to death, according to the Law aforesaid, which hath been executed upon two of them.

(A Declaration)

The similarities between the first two texts, and the contrasts between the second and third, are obvious; David D. Hall argues that such similarities demonstrate that the Quakers 'had the martyrs Foxe described in mind as they were whipped or led up to the scaffold' (p.188). The Massachusetts declaration, on the other hand, is a dry statement of fact: they were banished, they returned and admitted that they had broken the law, they suffered the consequences. Even their names are avoided, as are any details of the trial, of debate, of the manner in which they died. The account is both impersonal and passive, only the dead having seemed to play any active role – they returned, they owned themselves to be banished, they were sentenced (by the court), and the law 'hath been executed' – there is no intent here, no desire or active seeking their death, no emotion. The legal process is attempted to be presented as impersonal and unavoidable, to make it appear that this is a punishment which has been brought by the offenders on themselves. Similarly, John Norton, a

minister who was appointed by the General Court to write a pamphlet defending the Massachusetts actions against the Quakers, used a metaphor which appears frequently in the texts to defend their actions:

The hardest Law that is now made is only, That after they have been convicted, they shall be sent out of the Colony (or banished) not to return upon pain of death, and certainly if the Sword of our Magistracy may not hold its point against such wicked and dangerous Seducers as they are, and bid them come at their peril, if such men as they must press in whether we will or no, we are in a sad case; they have warning sufficient, if they will still press in, their blood is upon their own head. The Law is but Defensive, I suppose a like Law to this hath been in England against the Jesuites ever since Queen Elizabeths time, and if many of these be not Jesuites, they are as bad or worse.

(Norton, London edition, p.82)

Again, the Massachusetts official defence rests on their own passivity; they have not attacked the Quakers, but merely held the passage with the point of the sword to defend themselves, and the Quakers have insisted on thrusting their bodies onto its blade and thereby, it is implied, essentially committing suicide.

Peter Pearson, on the other hand, makes the most of the dramatic potential associated with matters of life and death, the element that always drew crowds to hanging; a mixture of pity and fascination. Like the earlier Foxe, he gives all the details of the words and actions of the condemned, and then provides a commentary to guide the reader's interpretation of the facts he has given, describing the dead as being 'faithful witnesses', combating the 'Dragons power', and dying 'joyfully' and 'with praises in their mouths' – none of which interpretations are immediately obvious from the words and actions he has just described, which could as easily be read as dogged perseverance or even bitterness against their persecutors rather than joy and hope. The assurance that the dead are now enjoying their reward in Heaven is also common to both Foxe and Pearson.

The emphasis on drama and vivid storytelling and the demand for the reader's empathy also leads both Foxe and numerous Quaker writers to place the suffering human body at the centre of their accounts, to an extent which can be fairly gruesome. While the Quakers had less gory details to report, compared to the sometimes long-drawn-out burnings described by Foxe, with their sickening emphasis on the disintegration of the body in the fire, so that the 'the Fat, Water, and Blood dropped out at his Fingers ends' for example (Foxe, 'Account of the death of Bishop Hooper', p.127), they emphasised those occasions when they did have details of physical suffering:

They had *William Robinson* into the open street, and there stripped him and put his hands thorow the holes of the Carriage of a great Gun, where the Jaylor (a member of their church held them until the whipper gave him twenty stripes with a threefold Cord whip with knots on the end, which stripes he laid upon his body without mercy or pity according to the hearts desire of some of the blood-thirsty rulers, who bad whip him severley; so when they had inflicted his barbarous action upon his body, then they returned him with Marmaduke Stephenson again to prison.

(Stephenson, p.31)

The details add great vividness to the accounts – the melting of the burning body, the jailor holding Robinson's hands to keep him still during the whipping – and both make the scene more vivid, more dramatic, for the reader, and also emphasise the sufferer's fortitude. Furthermore, both writers use such details to vilify their enemies; for example, the writer describing William Robinson claims that the 'blood-thirsty rulers' had demanded especially severity in the 'barbarous' whipping. Corporal punishment such as this was not an unusual legal penalty in the period, but to suggest that the colonial authorities took a personal interest in inflicting pain and suffering was to put them in the role of persecutors, rather than enforcers of the law. The role Quaker writers thus assigned to the Puritan colonial authorities placed them in a tradition of depicting persecutors which can be traced back to associations of Catholic authorities with extreme persecution and a delight in inflicting cruel sufferings on their opponents. Like the Black Legend of the Spanish colonies in America, the use of violence is exploited in this Protestant tradition as a moral argument against the inflictors of violence; although there were, of course, other ways of interpreting violence and fitting it into a narrative framework, as I will argue in the next chapter.

This emphasis on pain and suffering allows these Quaker writers, as with Foxe before them, to depict the courage and resolution of those who are effectively volunteering to die – there are repeated moments of tension in the *Acts and Monuments* when freedom is offered if the condemned will recant, offers which are presented not as a desire to grant mercy – as the Massachusetts authorities portrayed their equivalent actions – but as a continued temptation until the moment of death. It is refused in the vast majority of cases in Foxe, and those who accept are afterwards conscience-stricken and repent and go to their deaths anyway. Similarly, the willingness of the Quakers to die for God and their beliefs is emphasised, in particular that of Mary Dyer, who matches any of Foxe's female martyrs for enthusiasm for her coming fate:

The like sentence did John Indicott their Governour pronounce against Mary Dyer, after M.S. was had away, Mary Dyer you shall go from the place from whence you came, namely the Prison, and from thence to the place of Execution, and be hanged there, till you are dead; I said, the Will of the Lord be done; Take her away Marshal; I said yea, and

joyfully I go; and in the way to the Prison often used such speeches with praises to the Lord for the same; I said to the Marshal, let me alone, for I should go to Prison without him; I believe you Mrs. Dyer, said he, but I must do what I am commanded.

(Stephenson, p.26)

Interestingly, this account directly echoes one in Foxe, where Mr Bartlet Green is described as walking from his sentencing 'until he came to the Prison door, into the which he joyfully entred', emphasising how much the Quakers were, consciously or unconsciously, paralleling the earlier tradition of martyrology in their behaviour and writing.¹⁸⁵ When Dyer was reprieved while standing on the gallows, the narrator reports that 'she was not forward to come down, but stood still saying, she was there willing to suffer as her Brethren did; unlesse they would null their wicked Law, she had no freedom to accept their reprief, but they pulled her down, and a day or two after carryed her out of Town by force'. Similarly, William Leddra wrote just before his death that

herein the record in Heaven knows I lye not, and the Witness in Earth is bearing Witness to me, that I yet do not (as I have not hitherto) seek to withdraw my Cheek from the Smiter, nor to turn aside my feet from the footsteps of the Flock; as witness this Chain and Log at my Leg; but do desire, as far as the Lord draws me, to follow my Forefathers and Brethren in Suffering and in Joy.

An Appendix, p.191

Leddra's description of the 'Chain and Log at my Leg' as a witness to his constancy suggests the ways in which suffering was used to give moral authority to his words, in much the same way as the numerous letters written by Quakers attacking the Puritan authorities in Massachusetts, all of which emphasise in the signature that they were written in prison: 'An Epistle of *William Leddra*, to Friends, written by him the day before he was put to Death' is signed '*Boston Goal*' (*An Appendix*, p.193). Both Dyer and Leddra display a voluntary willingness to suffer which the writers emphasise, in order to make it clear that they are bearing witness through taking on this test of suffering and death, rather than only enduring it because they have no choice.

Emphasising this allows these writers to dwell on the courage and endurance of the dying, and to use it as an argument for their virtue and God's aid to them, and thus a seal of approval for the beliefs that they are dying for. The idea of being able to bear superhuman levels of pain in the body without losing control of the spirit as being a sign of God's aid goes back at least to Foxe; in his famous account of their deaths, quoted earlier, Ridley tells Latimer 'Be of good heart, Brother, for God will either asswage the fury of the flame, or else strengthen us to abide it' (Foxe, 429). Elsewhere he records martyrs promising to demonstrate that they can control themselves by raising their arms to heaven

¹⁸⁵ Fox, 'The Examination and Condemnation of Mr Bartlet Green, Martyr', p.526

when they are on the point of death, or by continuing to pray although they have lost the power of speech. One martyr depicted by Foxe even makes a link explicitly between ability to bear the flames and evidence that his faith in God is not misplaced:

one named *Richard Jones*, a Knights Son, coming to M. *Farrar* a little before his death, seemed to lament the painfulness of the death he had to suffer; unto whom the Bishop answered again to this effect, That if he saw him once stir in the pains of his Burning, he should then give no credit to his Doctrine. And as he said, so he right well performed the same, for so patiently he stood, that he never moved, but even as he stood, holding up his Stumps, so still he continued, til one Richard Gravell with a staff dashed him upon the Head, and so struck him down.

(Foxe, p.178)

Through this assertion that the dying are given the ability to suffer, or have their pain reduced by God, the story is changed by Foxe and the martyrs he represents from the image of the heretic burning in the flames which prefigure hell, to a narrative of God's grace to his true servants in the time of their trial.

Although the Quaker executions involved a fairly quick death on the gallows rather than the long-drawn-out torture of burning, as discussed before, Quaker texts dealing with the controversy still put themselves in this tradition of God's support for his servants in their time of trial. Although not displaying quite the miraculously superhuman endurance of Dr. Farrar, William Leddra puts himself in the same tradition of the English martyrs when he announces in one of his letters from prison that

I further testifie in the fear of the Lord God, and witness with a Pen of Trembling, That the noise of the Whip on my Back, all the Imprisonments and Banishing upon pain of Death, and after returning, the loud threatning sound of an Halter from their mouths, who, *Jezebel*-like, sate on the Imperious Throne of Iniquity, did no more affright me, through the strength of the Power of God in me, than if they had threatned to bind a Spiders Web to my Finger

(*An Appendix*, p.191)

Although he does not explicitly claim that the whip did not hurt him, he claims at least a spiritual miracle, in that he feels no fear at pain and death; he claims that it is this, rather than any strength or fortitude of his own, that enables him to continue to suffer, and to bear witness to the truth of the Quaker beliefs of himself and his 'forefathers and brethren' through his ability to continue suffering.

Next, I want to look at the ways in which the last words and actions of Mary Dyer, Marmaduke Stephenson, William Robinson and William Leddra are depicted by Quaker writers. In doing so, I want to emphasise again how these were public moments, moments of ritual and public observation of the law being carried out, which those to be executed had been waiting for and were able to prepare themselves for, some time in advance. As discussed, it was a moment of testing and trial, and a chance for those involved to demonstrate the truth of their beliefs, to 'witness'; and as a result, it must be considered that, as with the earlier discussion of Native American conversion narratives, what we see in the descriptions of these deaths is not only a Quaker writer attempting to narrate the facts in such a way as to gain the sympathy of audiences; but also the conscious attempt of the Quakers on the gallows themselves, to act, speak, and appear in such a way as to convince their watchers of their sincerity and the rightness of their cause. This can be seen in the texts themselves; when William Leddra is executed, he pauses to think before he answers the question whether he has anything to say to the people, suggesting that this might be a record of the fact that he consciously decides what are the most effective words to use to get his image of himself as a martyr for God across.

The accounts of the deaths of the Quakers in Boston suggest, apart from anything else, great self-consciousness in their presentations of themselves, their choice of words. So, in the case of the first two deaths, we read that

when they were come to the Ladders foot, they took their leave each of other and W.R. stept up the ladder and spoke to the People, saying this is the day of your visitation wherein the Lord hath visited you, this is the day the Lord is arisen in his mighty Power to be revenged on all his adversaries, and the rope being about his neck, as he spake the executioner bound his legs and hands, and his neck cloth being tyed around his face, he said now ye are made manifest; so the executioner being about to turn him off the Ladder, he uttered this expression, saying, I suffer for Christ in whom I live, and for whom I die; So he being turned off, M.S. went up and spake to the people, saying, Be it known unto all this day that we suffer not as evil doers but for Conscience sakes; then being bound according to the former manner, as the Executioner was about to turn him off the Ladder, he uttered these words, saying, this day shall we be at rest with the Lord

(Stephenson, p.32)

And in the case of William Leddra, similarly:

When he came upon the Ladder, one said, William, Have you any thing to say to the People? and after some time he said, For the Testimony of Jesus, and for bearing witness against Seducers and Seduced, I am come to this day. And the last words he

spoke to best remembrance were, *Lord Jesus receive my soul, for unto thee I commit my spirit.*

(*An Appendix*, pp.195-6)

Robinson and Stephenson, and later Leddra, all chose first to insist that they were dying for their beliefs and as a result of persecution, rather than because they were criminals. This emphasises the real possibility that these deaths might have been interpreted differently, which is perhaps not obvious to the reader today. Precisely because the Quaker texts are so rhetorically successful, we tend to think of the Quakers as dying for their faith, whether or not we have sympathy with this as an intention; but this image was not a foregone conclusion, as demonstrated by the insistence of the Quakers on the fact that they were dying 'for the Testimony of Jesus, and for bearing witness' rather than for a crime. Conversely, Puritan authorities and writers tried hard to get the deaths interpreted as a matter of civil order, labelling the dead Quakers to the newly returned Charles II as

open Capital Blasphemers, open Seducers from the Glorious Trinity, the Lords Christ, our Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Gospel, and from the Holy Scriptures, as the rule of life, open enemies to Government it self, as established in the hands of any but men of their own Principles, Malignant and Assiduous Promoters of Doctrines, directly tending to subvert both our Churches and State [...] The *Quakers* died not because of their other Crimes how capital soever, but upon their superadded presumptuous and incorrigible contempt of Authority; breaking in upon us, notwithstanding the Sentence of Banishment made known unto them; Had they not been restrained so far as appeared, there was too much cause to fear that we our selves must quickly have dyed, or worse; and such was their Insolency that they would not be restrained but by Death

(*Humble Petition*, pp.3,8)

Although the charges of blasphemy and heresy are openly stated, this quickly leads into accusations of sedition and attacks on church and state; the writers could almost be describing the radical Protestants of the Parliamentary side who fought the civil war and kept the new king out of power for so long with their hints about Quakers being 'open enemies to Government it self, as established in the hands of any but men of their own Principles', and the conclusion that unless they were sentenced to death, they might have brought death 'or worse' to the colonies hints at armed rebellion or even religious massacre. In short, the Massachusetts authorities attempted to persuade readers that the executions were matters of legal necessity and the state defending itself against political radicals; the fact that the more enduring image is of men and women dying for their beliefs is testament to the success of the executed and the writers who created the narrative of martyrdom through their words and actions.

Finally, I want to note one more strategy found in both Quaker texts and in Foxe. This is the practice of describing the favourable reactions of onlookers to the suffering and death of the martyr, suggesting that the example of the sufferer is so powerful that even their enemies are forced to agree that they are a convincing witness for God. Foxe notes, for example, of one Dr. Taylor, that he 'often moved them [his guards] to weep, through his much earnest calling upon them to repent, and to amend their evil and wicked living. Oftentimes also he caused them to wonder and rejoice, to see him so constant and steadfast, void of all fear, joyful in heart, and glad to die.' Similarly, the deaths of the Quakers in Boston are said to have converted others: The historian Selleck claims two early Quaker leaders, John Chamberlain and Edward Wharton respectively, were converted by watching the executions of Robinson and Stevenson, and Mary Dyer respectively (pp.13-5). Another text, which describes the death of William Leddra, includes a letter claiming to be written by a non-Quaker, a visitor to Boston, who was impressed by his appearance and behaviour:

I am not of his Opinion: but yet truly me thought the Lord did mightily appear in the man...
I said then when the man was on the Ladder (who looked on me, and called me Friend, and said, *Know, that this day I am willing to offer up my Life for the Witness of JESUS*)...
Capt. Oliver said, *it was no such matter*; and asked, *What had I to do with it?* and besides, bad me to be gone: And I told them *I was willing; for I cannot endure to see this*,
I said. And when I was in the Town, some did seem to sympathize with me in my Grief.

(*An Appendix*, pp.197-8)

Leddra's manner of death is portrayed as having caused not only such a strong emotional reaction of grief in this apparently disinterested bystander that he tried to persuade the people to let him come down from the gallows and go free, and then refused to participate by watching his death; the use of the 'truly me thought the Lord did mightily appear in the man' is particularly significant. The old problem of hypocrisy discussed in the chapter on Praying Indians is repeated here, but both sides had faith that God would in some way cause it to come to light, to protect his people; and here this allegedly impartial stranger is claiming that although he disagrees with Quaker doctrine, Leddra's behaviour and appearance was such that the influence of God was plainly apparent.

In short, there were strong cultural associations with the dying, with deathbeds, and with specific forms of death – such as executions and martyrdom – in the seventeenth-century New England colonies. Both Puritan and Quaker writers attempted to describe the deaths of William Robinson, Marmaduke Stephenson, Mary Dyer and William Leddra so as to put them within a narrative favourable to their interpretations of events; respectively, as criminals and martyrs. However, the executed played their roles on the gallows and spoke their last words so effectively as to make the Quaker interpretation far more dominant, and the executions have gone down in history as matters of conscience. This moment of display also allowed Quaker writers to make use of the authority given to

the words of the virtuous at the point of death in order to vilify the Massachusetts authorities, and to give extra moral authority to their own religious beliefs.

Unsuccessful Puritan Adaptation

There is evidence in the texts discussing the Quaker controversy in New England that they made other attempts to find polemic arguments against the newcomers which were less successful. Interestingly, these seem largely to be related to trying to find evidence in Quaker physical appearance or behaviour, suggesting that the authorities were attempting to counter Quaker techniques which dramatised such evidence to prove sincerity, a witness to their beliefs.

The idea of using physical evidence to support theological accusations of blasphemy or depravity was not a new one in New England. One of the executed Quakers, Mary Dyer, had been involved in the Antinomian Controversy in the 1630s, and part of the evidence presented against her and Anne Hutchinson were their 'notorious births' – miscarried children who were exhumed and claimed to resemble monsters; as Ann G. Myles points out, the physical and external manifestation of their inward heresy (p.5).

Perhaps it was the success of this previous strategy which inspired John Norton, in his officially-backed pamphlet, *The Heart of New-England rent*, to attempt to use visual imagery and behaviour against the Quakers. It has been noted that the name 'Quaker' was a derisive nickname applied to them by their detractors originally, in response to an early practice among them of holding 'threshing meetings', where people would be converted and display extreme behaviour, such as fits and quaking (Bauman, pp.63-83). Norton makes the most of such events, although they seem to have been rare and were never seen in New England:

That the persons thus opinionated are called Quakers; is not from their tenets, but from the gestures where with they are acted, at or about the time if the reception of their revelations: or, when else, in reference to credit their doctrines. This very gesture as circumstanced, renders their way in no small degree suspitious, it being the ancient and known manner of Satan when he inspired his *Enthusiasts*, to afflict the bodyes of his instruments with pained & those most often in the bowells, and to agitate them with *Antick and Uncouth motions*, & in particular with this of *quaking & trembling*: thereby to amuse ignorant spectators with a superstitious astonishment, and so to disperse them to the expectation of some strange discovery preter-humane in pretence divine but indeed *diabolical*.

(Norton, pp.5-6)

Norton goes on to link this quaking specifically to classical pagan rites and to early church heretics, before concluding that 'Many instances of this nature, might be produced, but I shall only further mind the reader of the custome of the Powa's or Indian wizards, in this wilderness; whose bodies at the time of their diabolicall practises, are at this day vexed and agitated in a strange unwonted and dreadfull manner' (p.6). This is a fascinating attempt to link together two groups who the Puritan authorities of Massachusetts were deeply suspicious of and hostile to. By linking together two local hostile groups, one internal to the colony and the other external, Norton attempts to distance the ideas of the Quakers from those of the radical Protestants of the colonies, instead linking them, as he does elsewhere, with heretics, blasphemers and pagans.

This does not seem to have been a particularly successful argument, particularly since in a pamphlet debate which often saw the same ideas repeated again and again by different writers, this only seems to have been brought up on this one occasion. Perhaps this was because such examples of ecstatic quaking were relatively rare among Quakers, and were possibly never seen in the colonies, making the argument less effective for readers.

Another failed attempt is suggested by the text of George Bishope's book *New England Judged*, a pamphlet attacking the treatment of Quaker women, amongst others, in New England. It should be noted that this is a Quaker text and there is no impartial evidence that these events took place, so the accusation cannot be confirmed, but the story is an interesting and significant one:

Did ye not *shamelessly* cause *Two* of the *Women* aforesaid, viz. *Mary Fisher*, and *Anne Austin*, to be stript *stark* naked, and so to be *search'd* and *mis-used*, as is a *shame* to *Modesty* to name? And with such *Barbarousness*, as *One* of them, a *Married Woman* and a *Mother* of *Five Children*, *suffered* not the *like* in the bearing of *any* of *them* into the *World*? And when there was no *Token* found upon *them* but of *Innocency*, were ye satisfied therewith?

(Bishope, p.12)

This suggests that the authorities had the women stripped, possibly – as George A. Selleck has suggested – in order to try to identify the marks of witchcraft on them (Selleck, pp.9-10). Evidently the attempt failed through their inability to find anything but the '*Token...of Innocency*' on the women, but the fact that the attempt was made at all suggests that the authorities were aware of the symbolic power that behaviour and appearance could have, and were attempting to counter it through finding physical evidence of depravity. This backfired on them, however, with the suggestion that their conduct was immodest and indecent, and possibly lascivious as well. Interestingly, the same author goes on to contrast this behaviour with that of the local Native Americans:

Shall I take a View of the Indians near you? Their Kindness to those People in Entertaining them in their Wig-wams (or Tents) as their Inns upon their Travels in the Night (where otherwise, nothing but the Open Wilderness must have lodged them) in Cold and Rain, in Hunger and Thirst, and Weariness in their Journeying to you, and being banish'd from you [...] Their discovering of the Workings of some of your Priests, when they were got amongst them, to destroy them, and for the Indians to do it, which they refused; Their Commiserating the Sufferings which these People received at your hands; and being glad of their Deliverance; and Crying out against your Cruelty exercised upon these Servants of the Lord, about the worship of their God, doth sufficiently condemn you.

(Bishope, p.13)

This use of the kindness and hospitality of the supposedly savage and hostile Native Americans is a rhetorical device going back at least as far as Roger Williams, as discussed in the first chapter. But it is interesting in that it mirrors Norton's attempt to use the example of the 'heathen' Indians in an entirely opposite way. While Norton attempted to use the exotic and non-Christian nature of the Native Americans in order to distance Quakerism from mainstream colonial Puritanism, the Quaker writer George Bishope goes further, in suggesting that appearances are doubly deceptive, and contrasting this evidence of the hypocrisy of the Massachusetts authorities, who are godly on the surface but savage and cruel in their hidden actions; while the nobility of the apparent savages only throws this into greater contrast.

This evidence of failed attempts by the Massachusetts authorities to find ways to use the physical appearance and behaviour of the Quakers against them supports the idea that they were desperately trying to adapt their narratives and ways of constructing their own identity and that of their opponents, in the face of the Quaker appropriation of their previous mythology about themselves. That they were largely unsuccessful in doing so, and in convincing audiences across the Atlantic, at least in the short term, is suggested by the fact that the Restoration led to the release of all Quakers from colonial prisons. While it is doubtful that Charles II was particularly favourable to Quaker beliefs, the fact that Puritan rhetoric had failed to convince him that they were inherently dangerous social outcasts and potential rebels suggests that they had not yet developed a powerful narrative, in comparison to that of their Quaker opponents.

Conclusions

The arrival of Quaker Public Friends in Massachusetts represented a new challenge to the ways the Puritan authorities thought about and presented their colonial identity. The fact that the Quakers had to some degree usurped the Puritan view of themselves as persecuted victims, testifying and suffering for God, meant that they had lost the narrative they had previously used to justify their actions and control their image across the Atlantic. Quaker writers were able to make use of this, and of other culturally important associations between suffering and death, and spiritual authority, in order to attack the colonial authorities and appeal for sympathy to audiences across the Atlantic, including the newly restored Charles II. Although Charles' reasons in supporting the Quakers over the Puritans in the colonies were strategic and political, the fact that the Quaker writers had convinced him that they were unjustly suffering victims and the colonial authorities were in a position of political power and dominance, while the colonial authorities failed to convince him that the Quakers were dangerous social rebels and potential revolutionaries, suggests that the greater success of Quaker rhetoric played a role in his decision.

Charles' decision may have led to the immediate freeing of Quaker prisoners and a relaxing of legal penalties against Quakerism in the short term, but as soon as the Massachusetts authorities felt under pressure from external enemies in the long term, such repressive measures were re-enacted. My next two chapters will move away from the examination of specific groups and the challenges their claims made to Puritan identity in the 1650s and 1660s, and look instead at the threat to Puritan identity made by their involvement in a situation of conflict. The pressures put on Puritan colonial identity by the uncertainties and destruction of King Philip's War forced colonial writers to reassess and redefine the ways they saw themselves, and the ways they portrayed themselves to English audiences. These tensions were expressed in a large number of texts written about the conflict; by examining several different genres of these texts in the rest of this thesis, I will demonstrate different aspects of the way that the seventeenth-century New England Puritans used language and translation to depict their cultural, religious and national identities.

4. In a Glass, Darkly: Methods of Understanding King Philip's War

Introduction

In this chapter and the next, I will move away from looking at specific groups within colonial New England, and discuss instead the impact that the 1675-6 conflict usually known as King Philip's War had on the portrayal of Puritan identity.¹⁸⁶ This conflict was hugely destructive and violent on the part of all involved, and shook colonial self-confidence by coming close to destroying the New England colonies altogether. Suddenly, colonists were forced to reassess their vision of themselves as inevitably destined to expand their settlements across the region, and had to question what their future place in the region would be. In my final chapter, I will investigate depictions of translation and foreign languages in texts written during the conflict; here, I will look more specifically at the ways in which narratives of the conflict itself are constructed in contemporary texts.

I will discuss in particular the ways in which these writers used linguistic and rhetorical methods to reassert their belief in their central position in the narrative of the region, which they felt to be under threat from their unexpected losses during the first part of the war. I will also argue that New Englanders had to come to terms with the levels of violence and inhumanity demonstrated by their own soldiers, including the burning of a fort containing women and children as well as enemy soldiers. Although such events were not unheard of in the seventeenth century, they undermined the colonists' claims to be the 'civilised' group in the region, in contrast to their 'savage' neighbours. In examining the texts written about the war, I will discuss how they described events which had the potential to undermine such a view of their national and cultural identity as a group.

I will begin this chapter by giving a brief background to the conflict which has become known as King Philip's War, and an account of the wide range of texts which were written and published in response to it. I will then go on to discuss the literary and rhetorical techniques used by these texts, in particular, the use of Old Testament characters and narratives as a lens through which to interpret contemporary events. Throughout the chapter, I will link these methods and ideas to one particular rhetorical feature which is unusually common in these texts, and which I will now touch on before going on to discuss the background to the conflict.

¹⁸⁶ The question of how to name this conflict is contested; I refer to it as "King Philip's War" in response to the persuasive arguments put forward by Lepore. Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage Books/ Random House, 1999) xv-xxi

A Glass for New England

'The mirror of the Christian world' is what Ben Thompson called New England, in his epic poem *New Englands Crisis*, which recounted the events of King Philip's War in rather bad verse. Similarly, other poems of the period offer *A Looking Glass for the Times*, or *A Glass for the People of New England*. The images of mirrors and reflections occur frequently in the texts written in New England in 1675 and later, which deal with King Philip's War. Both 'glass' and 'mirror' were used in this period to mean both a reflective surface, used to look at an image of yourself and examine your appearance; and as a metaphor, encapsulating the idea of something which enabled you to see yourself more accurately and clearly, or which offered a model or example you should try to emulate.¹⁸⁷

Furthermore, mirroring was a common theme in the religious thought of the time, which permeated a large part of the ideas of colonial society as well through the medium of sermons and religious texts, in particular through the idea of typology, in which parallels were drawn between Old Testament historical events, and New Testament spiritual ones; so, for example, it was believed that Moses was a historical figure but also a 'type' of Christ. Furthermore, it was believed that this linking of material Old Testament to spiritual New Testament extended into the history of the Christian Church, so that events for the whole of time could be read as spiritual versions of events in the Old Testament. Comparisons of the New England colonies, settled by a religiously-inspired migration, to the settlement of the Israelites in the Promised Land were a cliché of Protestant rhetoric in the period, and didn't only apply to New England; the idea of a spiritual Israel is a common one in English texts as well. References to biblical figures, places and events in these narratives, I will argue, use the mirroring practices of typology to suggest associations for colonial actions which supported their aims and helped them maintain their cultural identities in a time of extreme stress.

Nor is it only direct references in these texts which recall mirrors. Throughout the texts which deal with King Philip's War, there are repeated symmetries, parallels, reflections, in a way which is almost wholly absent from the depictions of the Pequot War – even in accounts written at the same time by the same writer, such as Hubbard's *A Narrative of the Trouble With the Indians in New England*, which concentrates on the 1675-6 conflict, but which includes a postscript on the Pequot War. Why is the mirrored parallel such a repeated image? Why did colonial writers reporting or commenting on this conflict feel it to be so appropriate, so useful, that it appears time and time again across otherwise disparate texts?

Furthermore, Renée Bergland argues that the imagery of mirroring was an important metaphor in colonial literature. She suggests that 'exchanges of looks, images, and self-images were a vital and

¹⁸⁷ Definitions from the *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, www.oed.com, accessed on the 28/07/10

dynamic part of cross-cultural dialogue' and argues that this is representative of the ways in which the experience of looking at the Other, or trying to see the other in their different cultural frame, only led to them reviewing their ideas about themselves: 'in colonial discourse discovery the New World is finally simply a matter of seeing Europeans in a new context, and simultaneously, of refusing to see the people who were at home in that context before the Europeans arrived.'¹⁸⁸ Although Bergland is largely discussing the period of early colonial encounter rather than the seventeenth century, her analysis of the importance of mirror imagery and its relationship to colonial writing introduces an important theme in this chapter.

Background to King Philip's War

In 1675 the New England colonies had expanded to such an extent that they were putting increasingly intense pressure on the Native American colonies around them. They were becoming more confident and a dominant power in the region, having conquered and dissolved the previously extremely powerful Pequot group in 1636-7 in a quick and decisive conflict. However, land demands and an aggressive style of colonial diplomacy were antagonising local Indian sachems, and the English missionary project was beginning to make serious attempts to convert local Native Americans to Christianity. More than two thousand converts were living in the fourteen praying towns of Massachusetts, Plymouth, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, where they usually abandoned their traditional lifestyles and leaders as well as their religion when they took up Christianity. This included 60% of the Wampanoag, half of whom not only lived in the Praying Towns but were also baptised.¹⁸⁹

In emphasising pressure on Native American land and culture as responsible for the tensions leading up to war, I am in agreement with critics such as Ziff, and Slotkin and Folsom, who argue that the conflict grew out of a change in Native American attitudes post-1662, which was in turn due to changing land ownership, rising English populations, and missionary success.¹⁹⁰ This combination of economic, social and cultural pressures explain convincingly the reasons for such a large-scale and violent conflict; Lepore argues that in their attacks on English cattle and property the Wampanoag and their allies were symbolically attacking the elements of European culture which had been detrimental to their own way of life (Lepore, *Name of War*, 94-6). I reject the idea of the historian Vaughan, who is highly sympathetic to the Puritans, that it was purely Philip seeing his power declining which led to the war; and I am in complete disagreement with the view of Leach, who wrote before recent

¹⁸⁸ Renée Bergland, 'Toltec Mirrors: Europeans and Native Americans in each other's eyes' in *A Companion to the Literatures of Colonial America*, eds Castillo and Schweitzer (Blackwell, Oxford, 2005) 141-158, pp.142, 148

¹⁸⁹ Figures taken from Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2001) pp.90-105; and Larzer Ziff, *Puritanism in America: New Culture in a New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p.174

¹⁹⁰ 'Introduction' to *So Dreadfull A Judgement: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War 1676-1677*, eds Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom, (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1978) pp.3-54. Ziff, pp.171, 176

developments in Native Studies and Ethnohistory, that the conflict was a race war, fought between incompatible cultures which would eventually have to attempt to destroy one another in a war of extermination; his view is that the New England colonists were representatives of a 'mightier civilization whose destiny was to conquer and rule the land which had once belonged to the red men' (p.199).¹⁹¹ Rather, my views are more in sympathy with those of scholars such as Wyss and Lepore, who argue that although we – and often, those at the time – could understand the social and economic tensions which sparked the conflict, colonial writers describing the war chose to narrate it as a religious war, of good versus evil.¹⁹² Although I agree with these two scholars, I emphasise more strongly that this presentation of the war as a religious struggle was a deliberate rhetorical strategy on the part of contemporary Puritan writers, rather than purely being an unconscious way of viewing the world on their part.

However the situation in New England in the early 1670s is interpreted, historians and critics agree that there were enormous tensions in the region, which came to a head with the death of John Sassamon in January 1674/5.¹⁹³ Sassamon is a fascinating figure, a Praying Indian who had converted to Christianity and learned to read and write. He had also spent time with Philip, the Wampanoag sachem who was to lead the campaign against the English colonists and whose name the 1675-6 conflict is usually known by. Philip was also known as Metacom or Metacomet, and is referred to as such by some critics; in referring to him as Philip in this chapter I do not mean to privilege his Anglicised name over his Wampanoag one, but am using it in accordance with Jill Lepore's convincing argument that Philip himself chose to adopt this new name, and that was significant to him, even if the English colonists interpreted it differently (Lepore, xix-xxi).

Sassamon spent time with Philip before the conflict began, although we are not sure of the reasons why. Possibly he decided to return to his original way of life temporarily, but there is also the possibility that he went, on Eliot's suggestion, to try to convert the powerful Wampanoag sachem; it has also been suggested that he was working as a spy for Philip or for the English – the theories and speculation about his life and death are endless.¹⁹⁴ In January 1675, Sassamon warned the English that the Wampanoag sachem was planning an attack on the English. On 29 January he was found

¹⁹¹ Alden T. Vaughan, *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians 1620-1675* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1965), pp.311-2; Douglas Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (New York: Macmillan, 1958) pp.1, 199, 250

¹⁹² Hilary E. Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity and Native Community in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), p.31; Lepore, *Name of War*, pp.97-121

¹⁹³ Dates in the paragraphs below describing the war are taken from Leach. pp.30-5; Lepore, *Name of War*, xxv-xxviii, pp.21-3

¹⁹⁴ Nobody is entirely sure what happened to Sassamon, whether his death was murder, accident, a natural death or even suicide. Early accounts saw him as having been killed because he was a Christian; later historians have moved from debating whose side he really represented and whether there was a plot against the English to an interest in him as a mediator between cultures. Leach saw him as possibly being murdered because he had revealed a plot by Philip against the English (pp.31-2); Lepore interprets him as dying because he exploited his position as a mediator between the two sides, pp.21-57. Recently, Yasuhide Kawashima re-examined the evidence from the inquest and argued that any of these were possible given the medical evidence recorded. Yasuhide Kawashima, *Igniting King Philip's War: The John Sassamon Murder Trial* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2001) See in particular Chapters 7. Legal Imperialism: The Murder Trial and the Executions (102-111) and 8. The Wampanoag Story (112-124)

dead in Assawampsett Pond and buried, and later the English dug up and examined the body, concluding that he had been murdered. On 8 June, they hanged three Wampanoag men – one of them an important counsellor to Philip – as the murderers, on what is now considered to be extremely dubious testimony, and after a trial which the historian Kawashima points out was not legally valid (Kawashima, pp.102-111). On 11 June the Wampanoag were reported to be in arms near Swansea, and attacks on colonial settlements began on the 24th of that month .

Various attempts were made to prevent Philip from allowing the conflict to escalate into what the English feared and what he seems to have hoped for, a war over the future of the colonies in the region. While some critics, such as Ziff and Jennings, argue that Philip and his allies were pursuing short-term aims while the English had long-term plans for the region that they hoped to pursue through the conflict, I would argue that both sides saw the war as an attempt to gain a decisive dominance over the other side.¹⁹⁵ In Roger Williams' letter telling of the burning of Providence, for example, he talks to some of the warriors who have burned the town, and they tell him 'they cared not for Planting these Ten Years they would live upon us & Dear' and also that 'Cuttaqueen said a moneth hence after we have bin on Plymouth Side'. Although these statements are somewhat confused and contradictory, they imply that this group, at least, saw the conflict as being against the English colonists in general, and to be intended to force them out of the region.¹⁹⁶

That a large number of colonists, in their turn, were becoming or had become hostile to the Native Americans as a race rather than in terms of political or even cultural alignment is suggested by the fact that emotions were running so high that on 13 October the government ordered that the Christian Indians be moved from their towns to what was effectively a concentration camp on Deer Island, where they would both be unable to participate in any fighting, and also be safer from attacks by colonists, the majority of whom saw all Native Americans as enemies. These Praying Indians, who were effectively allies of the colonists and loyal to their interests, suffered great hardships on the barren and exposed island without proper food or shelter through the winter.

Treaties had been signed with the Narragansett group on 15 July and 18 September, but despite this, as the conflict continued, the Commissioners of the United Colonies ordered a joint attack on the Narragansett at the beginning of November, printing a broadside to justify themselves on 7 December, suggesting that they felt at least some need to justify their actions. It seems likely that they were as interested in the large areas of high quality Narragansett land as they were in military expediency; by July 1678 Narragansett lands were already being advertised in print as 'very pleasant

¹⁹⁵ Ziff, p.171; Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (University of North Carolina Press, 1975, Norton 1976) pp.298-300

¹⁹⁶ Brandon F. Swan, ed. and transcriber, 'A copy of a letter of Roger Williams' (Providence: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1971)

and fertile, fit and commodious for plantation'.¹⁹⁷ On 19 December they made a surprise night attack on the Narragansett fort in the Great Swamp, set it on fire, and massacred the majority of the occupants.

Despite this success, which they hailed as a victory, the colonial war effort was going badly. By 23 February the Native American attacks, which had begun by concentrating on outlying and vulnerable villages, had moved to within ten miles of Boston. On 29 March Providence was burnt. It seemed likely for some time that the English colonies might be entirely destroyed, or at least driven back to the coast, by the Indian armies; the merchant Nathaniel Saltonstall wrote that

these parts which were not many *moneths* since hardly to be Parrallel'd for *plenty* and *security*, are now almost destroyed and laid waste by the savage Cruelties of a *bloody* (and sometimes *despicable*) Enemy [...] unlesse our God (whose *tender mercies are over all his works*) in compassion to the English Nation in this Wildernesse, wonderfully appear for our deliverance, nothing could be expected but an utter Desolation.¹⁹⁸

After the burning of Providence, however, the tide began to turn in favour of the colonists. This was due, at least partly, to the skills of Native American scouts and reinforcements, who were recruited both by innovative soldiers such as Benjamin Church, who persuaded captured enemies to switch sides and fight for the English; and from among the Praying Indians on Deer Island, some of whom were finally given permission by the colonial authorities to return to the mainland to help the army. Gradually, the colonial army learnt new tactics to deal with the terrain, often from observing their Native allies and enemies, and their military successes began to increase, while on the other hand Philip's alliance of Native American groups began to collapse. On 2 August Church captured Philip's wife and son, who were promptly sold into slavery along with a large number of other captured prisoners, with the money going towards paying the expenses of the war. On the twelfth of the same month Alderman, an Indian soldier allied with the English, shot Philip in a fight at Mount Hope, and the English colonists began to feel that the war was over.

Both sides suffered enormous losses in terms of life, goods and suffering during the conflict: twelve colonial towns were destroyed and more than half attacked; between ten and sixteen percent of the adult male colonists are estimated to have died, while Bross, Hinderaker and Mancall claim that

¹⁹⁷ Simon Bradstreet et al., *An Advertisement Whereas the Lands of Narrhaganset, and Niantick Countryes, and parts adjacent [...]* (Boston, 1678) one-page printed broadside; Jennings, pp.298-312, also argues that the attack on the Narragansett was inspired by English land greed

¹⁹⁸ N.S., 'A New And Further Narrative of the State of New-England; being a Continued Account of the Bloudy Indian War' (London, 1676) reprinted in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars 1675-1699* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913) 75-100, p.78

Algonquian casualties reached nearly forty percent, with many more sold into slavery.¹⁹⁹ Slotkin and Folsom claim that the conflict was, proportionately, the bloodiest war fought on American soil ('Introduction' to *So Dreadfull*, pp.3-4).

The end of the war left the English in a decisively dominant position in the region, and their Native American opponents further weakened (Bross, p.164; Hinderaker and Mancall, pp.46-73). The balance of power shifted decisively, as did relationships between colonists and Native Americans. Eliot's Praying Towns were never so large nor so successful again; only four of the fourteen were eventually rebuilt and convert numbers never regained pre-war levels, although a Native American church of converts who were accepted by the English as full church members was eventually gathered.²⁰⁰

Furthermore, King Philip's War seems to have been the point at which the attitudes of the colonists towards the Native Americans shifted from an ability to draw distinctions between different political and social groupings, and most importantly between 'heathen' and 'praying' Indians, to a more general blanket dislike and mistrust of all Native Americans, purely on account of their ethnicity. This is a view generally agreed with by critics and historians, including Bross, Breen, Ziff, and Oberg.²⁰¹ Others, such as Jennings, and Shoemaker in her analysis of the growth of racism in America, argue that such racism only developed in the eighteenth century, and Karen Kupperman warns of the dangers of reading more modern ideas of race back into the early modern period. However, the lack of trust in even the Praying Indians after King Philip's War, coupled with the new English dominance of the region, had a decisive effect on relationships between Native Americans and English colonists.²⁰² For example, an act by the General Assembly held for the Colony at Newport on 4 May 1681 found it necessary to publicly declare that 'all his Majestys subjects in this Collony are hereby Required to behave them selves peaceably towards the Indians in like manner as before the warr, and now person or persons shall presume to doe any such unlawfull acts of violence against the Indians upon their perrills' after Benjamin Hernden Junior, a Newport man, shot at an Indian in the woods '[wi]th an Intent to have killed him, and for noe other cause (as he himselfe confesseth) but for

¹⁹⁹ Kristina Bross, *Dry Bones and Indian Sermons: Praying Indians in Colonial America* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004); Eric Hinderaker and Peter C Mancall, *At The Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America* (John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 2003)

²⁰⁰ Ola Elizabeth Winslow, *John Eliot, "Apostle to the Indians"* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968) pp.178-87

²⁰¹ For this argument, see Bross, pp.146-185; Ziff, pp.175-6; Louise A. Breen, *Transgressing the Bounds: Subversive Enterprises Among the Puritan Elite in Massachusetts, 1630-1692* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) pp.145-196; Michael Leroy Oberg, *Dominion and Civility: English Imperialism and Native America, 1585-1685* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1999) p.158

²⁰² Jennings, pp.298-300; Nancy Shoemaker, *A Strange Likeness: Becoming Red and White in Eighteenth-Century North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Karen Ordahl Kupperman, 'Presentment of Civility: English Readings of American Self-Presentation in the early years of colonization' *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series, 54.1 (1997) 193-228, pp.194, 207

that the said Indian would not obey his word, and stand at his command, who indeed had noe Authority nor just cause so to Com[m]and'.²⁰³

The war also had a huge effect on the English colonists' perceptions of themselves. During the early part of the conflict, when it seemed a real possibility that they would lose the military struggle and be forced back to the coast, if not out of America altogether, they urgently questioned what they had done in order for God's favour to be withdrawn from them; and throughout the war they attempted to justify their actions and gain support from an audience in England, as well as more divine aid. In order to achieve this, they wrote and published a huge number of texts during and after the conflict, presenting their narratives and interpretations of events.

Background to Texts

The colonial texts written during and about King Philip's War cover a huge range of formats and points of view, from newsletters sent to contacts in London and published there during the conflict, to histories and narratives written after the war had ended, to unpublished sources, to poems and maps. The sources I am going to look at in this chapter cover a large range of these forms, and were published in both England and New England. Where and when these sources were published, and by whom, obviously affects the ways they were written, and such details are important to take into consideration when discussing representations of the conflict; as Slotkin notes, the fact that texts could be printed in New England was hugely significant in terms of allowing writers to shape their texts for a colonial audience, rather than writing for the English – although he notes that many were aimed at English audiences.²⁰⁴ As a result, I want to begin with a brief discussion of these issues. I will avoid detailed individual discussion of sources here, giving it instead when I discuss each text during the chapter; instead, this overview is intended to give some idea of the range covered by the King Philip's War texts and some of the issues involved in their analysis.

I would also like to note that this was a period, as Frank Tallett points out, when two major developments in writing about war were coming about: printing was leading to those outside social elites having access to information about conflicts; and governments began to use this mass literary form to distribute information, developing new techniques of "black" propaganda, deliberately lying to smear the enemy's reputation, as with Dutch attacks on Spanish cruelties, which led to the Black Legend.²⁰⁵ Although few of the texts I discuss in this chapter can be seen as direct propaganda by the

²⁰³ Providence, RI, John Carter Brown Library, MS Amer 1681 My 4. At the Genl. Assembly Held for the Collony at Newport the 4th of May 1681

²⁰⁴ Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1996) p.79

²⁰⁵ Frank Tallett, *War and Society in Early-Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 1997) pp.232-4

authorities, the fact that this was the background to contemporary war writing is significant for the ways in which these writers frame their texts.

I include in my discussion letters which were written in the period but not published until much later. Although these letters were not printed at the time, and therefore were not a direct influence on public audiences, I feel they are useful to examine. One reason for this is that due to their nature as letters, they were attempting to influence their readers in their account of events, and therefore give an insight into the attitudes of the writer and how they attempted to portray themselves. Many letters written in the period were published, and therefore these writers might have expected (to varying degrees depending on the individual and letter in question) that there was a possibility their words might end up in a format available to the general public. Furthermore, Philip Round notes that in the period 'Transatlantic letters [...] became marketable commodities in their own right, printed and distributed in the form of news books, open letters, and circulars'.²⁰⁶ Given this contemporary attitude to letters, it seems reasonable to assume that many of their writers would have at least been aware of the possibility that they would be circulated in public.

Those letters which were published in the period were all put into print in London; the printed editions usually define themselves in their titles as taken from letters sent by New Englanders to contacts in England. These letters range from series of in-depth analyses of the situation to brief paragraphs in news letters. The writers of the letters are often identified as merchants, whose letters were usually seen as tools of business and trade rather than being private communications (although they could often be confidential). As a result, they can be understood as being, to some extent, public pronouncements, meant to influence the reader with an idea of the general situation, discussed, and passed on, rather than a purely private communication. It should also be kept in mind that such letters were selected, possibly edited, and published by Londoners, and may have been changed or influenced by this.

I also discuss the poetry written about the situation during the war. Benjamin Tompson is the most prominent figure here; his verse narratives describing events in the conflict were published in slightly different forms and in several different versions in London and Boston, each with a slightly different title. Conversely, the other poem I discuss, Peter Folger's *A Looking Glass for the Times*, was only printed three hundred years later, although it may have been circulated in manuscript form. Written by a Rhode Islander and fiercely critical of the colonial intolerance towards Quakers, it is perhaps hardly surprising that it was not printed in New England, at least; however, evidence in the poem suggests that Folger intended it to be read by a public audience, since he takes care to identify himself at the end of the poem:

²⁰⁶ Phillip H. Round, 'Neither Here nor There: Transatlantic Epistolarity in Early America' in *A Companion to the Literatures of Colonial America*, eds Castillo and Schweitzer (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005) pp.426 – 445, pp. 429, 434

But I shall cease and set my Name
to what I here insert,
Because to be a Libeller,
I hate it with my Heart.
From Sherbon [Nantucket] Town, where now I dwell,
My Name I do put here,
Without Offence your real Friend,
it is PETER FOLGER.²⁰⁷

Another two important forms of writing dealing with King Philip's War were histories and sermons, unambiguously public texts; both genres were published in Boston, and can be seen therefore as expected to be of interest to a New England rather than an international audience, and tailored to the writers' needs and desires in addressing this local audience. The sermons I will examine were largely printed towards the end of the conflict or after it, but were written over a range of periods during and after the period.

The histories published can be divided much more obviously by when they were written and published; some react to the immediate events of the war (this category is dominated by Mather and Hubbard, who competed to get their accounts of the conflict written and printed first), while others were the result of a longer retrospective, in some cases written towards the end of the century. Another kind of history, and a form which largely developed during the conflict, was the genre of captivity narratives; I will, however, not discuss these at great length here, because I analyse them in depth in my final chapter.

Finally, I discuss one example of a form of writing which was important in the period but which does not appear so much in the context of King Philip's War: the polemical pamphlet. Possibly because dissenting voices like Peter Folger were unable or unwilling to publish in a time of conflict, possibly because the nature of such paper debates demanded time to consider, write, and publish, and this was more difficult in a time of conflict than letters and sermons, I only look at one example produced in the period. This is entitled *A glass for the people of New England*, and was written by S.G. and printed in 1676, possibly in London although this is not certain, as there is no identifying location on the title page. This, like Folger's poetry, attacks New England as suffering for having persecuted Quakers and Baptists, now being punished by God through the medium of the war for their sins. Probably published surreptitiously and without official permission, since its place of publication is not identified, it aims for a public audience while maintaining near anonymity for its author.

²⁰⁷ Peter Folger, *A Looking Glass for the Times: or, The Former Spirit of New England Revived in this Generation* (Providence: Sidney S. Rider, 1883) p.21

Defeat and Destruction

Having now introduced the period and the texts, I want to examine in more detail the ways in which these works address two issues in particular raised by the conflict: the possibility of defeat; and the brutality of the violence carried out by colonial forces. The former was a real and traumatic possibility in the early days of the conflict, when not only did news of defeats and Indian attacks arrive frequently, but it often did so on days of humiliation and thanksgiving, which thus appeared to be punished rather than rewarded by God. Increase Mather, in his *Brief History of the War*, describes the key turning point in the conflict as being the first day of humiliation when this did *not* happen: 'After which we have not received such sad tidings, as usually such dayes have been attended with, ever since this warr began.'²⁰⁸ The second issue is the fact that the acts carried out by colonial soldiers on their enemies were frequently as horrific (or more so) as anything done to the settlers which these war texts reported with such indignation; I will look in detail at the ways in which these works narrate and frame such actions in order to excuse them.

I intend to discuss four ways in which these writers use images connected with the idea of mirroring, or reflection, in order to deal with these issues and reframe them to suit their own purposes. These four themes are: the use of an Old Testament lens to interpret events through the use of typology; images of mirroring or doubling relating to the structure of the war; moments when the Native American enemy is imagined as imitating or reflecting the English lifestyle; and finally, the reporting of 'moments of tension' in which English actions mirror those which they use to accuse the Indians of savagery.

Framing Colonial Conquest: New England in an Old Testament Mirror

The first example of the idea of mirroring in these texts which I want to examine is the ways in which they portray colonial events in relation to Old Testament narratives. Through extensive use of biblical analogies, many of these colonial writers effectively hold events up to an Old Testament mirror, allowing them to present their own actions in a favourable light.

It is important to note that this use of biblical analogies was not merely a convention of the time. Although it was common in the period, there were alternatives available to these writers, and to some extent the use of biblical analogies was a choice for them. This is demonstrated by the fact that some

²⁰⁸ Increase Mather, 'A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England' (Boston, 1676) reprinted in Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom, eds, *So Dreadfull A Judgment: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War 1676-1677* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1978) 79-206, p.126

writers during King Philip's War use an alternative tradition to frame their texts: references to classical literature and history. Thompson and Mather make use of the classical tradition, and Thompson, in particular, is unusual in using far more references to the classics than to the Bible. This may be due to the fact that although Harvard-educated, graduating in 1662, he became a schoolmaster rather than a minister, unlike many of the other writers of the texts in this chapter. Thus, although he describes New England as 'the mirror of the Christian world', refers to a grieving mother as 'Rachel-like' and praises the piety of the early settlers who 'by their prayers slew thousands angel-like', his poems are much more likely to compare enemies and friends to figures such as Medusa, Achilles, Aeneas and Mars from classical mythology, and Nero and Domitian from Roman history.²⁰⁹ Such analogies play a similar role to the biblical typology about to be discussed, in that they allow acts of violence to be framed, according to the writer's opinion of them, either in terms of heroic action (Achilles, Aeneas, Mars) or monstrous or tyrannical acts (Medusa, Nero, Domitian).

This demonstrates that there was another framework available to the writers who overwhelmingly chose to use biblical analogies. That other writers beyond the schoolmaster Thompson would have been aware of this framework is suggested by the fact that Samuel Eliot Morison notes in his study of the history of Harvard that part of the entry requirements for any student who studied there was 'to have read numerous Latin authors, before they entered college'.²¹⁰ And in fact, Mather, who was a minister, and who usually frames his work through biblical analogies, also makes occasional references to classical history. The title page to his *A relation of the troubles which have hapned (sic) in New-England by reason of the Indians there from the year 1614 to the year 1675* (Boston, 1677) gives one quotation from the psalms, and another (slightly misquoted) from Cicero: '*Historia est testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoria, magistra vitae, nuntia vetustatis*' ['History, which bears witness to the passing of the ages, sheds light upon reality, gives life to recollection and guidance to human existence, and bears tidings of ancient days'].²¹¹ Although he focuses his narrative, in the main, through his understanding of the Bible, he is also capable of demonstrating his high level of education and knowledge of classical ideas about the writing of history; in other words, he has both models of history open to him, so the fact that he chooses to use the Old Testament to understand and interpret events signals the fact that this was significant to him.

The use of a biblical framework to understand events is an important one, as has been noted by Bozeman, in his study of Puritanism, *To Live Ancient Lives*. Bozeman argues that 'the biblical text became a kind of lens projecting an entire realm of experience over against the everyday', and that

²⁰⁹ Benjamin Thompson, 'New Englands Crisis, or a Brief Narrative of New-Englands Lamentable Estate at present' (Boston, 1676) reprinted in Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom, eds, *So Dreadfull A Judgement: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War 1676-7*, (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press) 213-233, pp.219, 220, 226

²¹⁰ Samuel Eliot Morison, *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936) p.169

²¹¹ Increase Mather, *A Relation of the Troubles which have hapned in New-England by reason of the Indians there from the year 1614 to the year 1675* (Boston, 1677) Title page. The original Latin begins 'Historia verso testis temporum'; original and translation taken from Cicero, *De Oratore* Vol.II ix. p.36, with a translation by H. Rackham (London: William Heineman Ltd, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1942); Latin p.224, English p.225

this projection of the self into the primordial was spontaneous and taken for granted by Puritans.²¹² Another way of putting this is that these writers were holding a biblical mirror up to events; however it is expressed, the important point is that colonial writers manufactured texts which were favourable to them, not – in the main – by altering or distorting the events which they describe (although this did also happen, as I will discuss below); but by changing the frame of reference in order to change the way these events are interpreted by the reader. By presenting events reflected in the mirror of the Old Testament, rather than, for example, the seventeenth-century Rules of War or legal arguments, writers influence their readers' interpretation of the events they read about in important ways, which I will now look at in more detail.

The most important point of Biblical reference in a large majority of the King Philip's War texts is the link between the New England colonies and Israel. Increase Mather refers to New England as 'the English Israel which is seated in these goings down of the Sun' (*Brief History*, p.86); Hubbard calls the colonies 'the remaining Israel of God in these ends of the earth'.²¹³ Even so secularly-minded a man as the merchant N.S., who was almost certainly not a minister, ends his newsletter on the conflict with a reference to specific verses of Psalm 80, which laments the problems of Israel – and so, by extension, New England – as a colony under attack.²¹⁴

Of course, this drawing of connections between the Old Testament Israel and a contemporary Christian community was nothing new or unusual. Protestants in England had been describing it in terms of Israel for years, and the comparison was a common one in the religiously radical New England colonies. This was in accordance with the Protestant practice of typology, in which historical Old Testament events and figures would be linked to their spiritual counterparts in the New Testament, and beyond that into the spiritual history of the Church. In this way of thought, the physical nation of Israel in the Old Testament, God's chosen people, is mirrored and fulfilled by the spiritual Church in the New; and seventeenth-century writers also frequently continued the parallel to make the godly nation of believers, England, into a new spiritual Israel, the counterpart and replacement for the Israel of the Old Testament. The historian Christopher Hill discusses this link, noting that writers who saw England as a chosen nation distinguished between Israel and the chosen within it, rather than understanding all English people to be among the saved.²¹⁵

The New England colonists, however, tended to also see New England as a physical mirror of Israel, as opposed to purely a spiritual one – something which was not the case in England, and which was a

²¹² Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *To Live Ancient Lives: The Primitivist Dimension in Puritanism* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988) p.34

²¹³ William Hubbard, *A narrative of the troubles with the Indians in New-England, from the first planting thereof in the year 1607, to this present year 1677, but chiefly of the late troubles in the two last years, 1675 and 1676* (Boston, 1677 [Also published London, 1677])

²¹⁴ N.S., 'The Present State of New-England with Respect to the Indian War' (London, 1675) reprinted in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars 1675-1699* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913) 24-50, p.50

²¹⁵ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995) p.267

practice that some colonists, such as Roger Williams, were vehemently opposed to, as Sacvan Bercovitch has persuasively argued.²¹⁶

Although theologically controversial, this understanding of New England as a physical as well as a spiritual new Israel was too useful a model for the New England writers to be able to resist, for reasons which become obvious when the references to the colonies as Israel are looked at in detail. So, for example, the psalm cited by N.S. reads when quoted in full:

Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.
Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land
[...] Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way
do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth
devour it. Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold,
and visit this vine²¹⁷

Similarly, Mather's reference to the English Israel is part of a sentence blaming the war on the Native American groups in the area:

That the Heathen People amongst whom we live, and whose Land the Lord God of our
Fathers hath given to us for a rightful Possession, have at sundry times been plotting
mischievous devices against that part of the English Israel which is seated in these
goings down of the Sun, no man that is an Inhabitant of any considerable standing, can
be ignorant.

(*Brief History*, p.86)

While in Samuel Nowell's sermon *Abraham in Arms*, it is argued that

[I]t is lawfull by war to defend what we lawfully obtained and come by, as our possessions,
lands, and inheritance here, to which we have as fair a title as any ever had, since Israels
title to Canaan. Theirs was not only a gift of Providence, but of Promise. Ours we can call
only a gift of Providence, but yet such as we may lawfully defend. As Jephtah said to the
Children of Ammon, *What Chemosh thy God gives thee to possess, wilt thou not possess
it?* So what God hath providentially given us, without injury to other, is that which we may
lawfully defend²¹⁸

²¹⁶ Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Madison, Wisconsin and London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1978) pp.42-5

²¹⁷ Psalms 80.8-9, 12-14

²¹⁸ S[amuel]. N[owell]., 'Abraham in Arms; or The first Religious General with his Army Engaging in a War' (Boston, 1678) reprinted in *So Dreadfull A Judgement: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War 1676-7*, eds. Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press) 271-300, p.276

The implications of the way these texts frame the New England colonies as a new Israel are obvious. The parallels between the situations of New England and Israel as successfully-founded colonies which are now under attack from the original inhabitants of the region suggests that the seventeenth-century colonists also have divine approval for their settlements. References to 'the Heathen People [...] whose Land the Lord God of our Fathers hath given to us for a rightful Possession', the place 'God hath providentially given us', the colonies to which 'we have as fair a title as any ever had, since Israels title to Canaan'; all these justifications and references attempt to write the New England colonies' situation into a biblical framework of understanding. This has the advantage, for these writers, that they have a much greater claim on the land if their settlements are understood as having a divine mandate for dominating the region, rather than the European legal rules which might condemn their semi-legal acquisitions of land from local Native American groups.²¹⁹

Such biblical understandings of New England's role in the divine plan also offered these King Philip's War writers a more hopeful way of interpreting the conflict and attempting to predict its result than a direct assessment of their position might have done. Ziff has pointed out that despite colonial arguments over whether King Philip's War was due to their tolerance or intolerance, all these writers shared the idea that they were the focus of God's attention, and used the appropriate Israelite imagery when talking about themselves (Ziff, p.181). The narratives of the Old Testament demonstrate repeatedly that while God is frequently angry with Israel and subjects his people to war, suffering, even defeat and captivity in order to punish them, in the end he will always relent when his people humble themselves and repent. This allows writers such as Mather to interpret their military defeats not as a sign that God has abandoned them, but that he is allowing them to be punished, and will save them in the end, so long as they repent of their sins and turn to God again.

This belief is reflected in New England use and development of the jeremiad, a sermon form which pointed out society's backslidings to the people and threatened them with the wrath of God unless they repented. Sacvan Bercovitch has argued persuasively that in the New England colonies, the jeremiad became more than a lament for cultural and material failings, and instead was applied to the spiritual state of the whole colony (Bercovitch, pp.1-30). He argues that rather than being a measure of declension, as Miller believed, the American Puritan jeremiad used conflict to argue for spiritual renewal in the community; that 'From the start the Puritan Jeremiads had drawn their inspiration from insecurity; by the 1670s, crisis had become their source of strength' (p.62). In other words, rather than being a sign of New England's failure, Bercovitch argues that preachers presented crises such as King Philip's War as a sign that God was punishing his backsliding people, so that he could reclaim them when they repented; if he didn't care, preachers argued, he would simply leave the colonists to damn themselves in peace.

²¹⁹ For the argument that Indian land sales were barely legitimate, see Jennings, pp.128-145

Jeremiads are so called because they are based on the calls to repentance issued to Israel by the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah, who promised the Israelites that they would eventually return from the Babylonian exile if they repented; significantly, as Slotkin points out, the King Philip's War narratives tend to frame their discussions of suffering in terms of the Babylonian exile, rather than the escape from Egypt, as in earlier colonial texts; rather than a people suffering on the way to the promised land, the colonial writers liken themselves to a later narrative, when the Israelites are punished through a temporary exile from the home they have already won (*Regeneration through Violence*, pp.92-3). Bercovitch notes that repeated features of the jeremiads are the use of Moses, David, and Peter, and references to the rebuilding of Jerusalem, while '[t]he image of New England as Job is characteristic'; all these are images which are frequently used in the King Philip's War texts, which I shall now discuss in more detail (Bercovitch, p.59).

This identification of the Native Americans with the local groups around Israel had significant implications for the ways in which Puritan writers were able to describe more specific events within the conflict, particularly those which made them uneasy, as they undermined their claim to be the 'civilized' group of the region, or undermined the legality of their claim to the land that they had settled on. Using a biblical viewpoint allowed events to be interpreted in a way which put the writer or those they were defending plainly in the right and justified them. Sometimes this was a defence against the common assumption of the period that there must be a direct link between worldly misfortune and God's punishment for some secret sin; so, for example, Mary Rowlandson often invokes Job in her captivity narrative – Job being the supreme example of a righteous biblical figure who was tested because of his virtue, rather than punished because of his sin. As mentioned above, he was a supreme figure of the jeremiads for this reason.²²⁰

However, often the implications are more sinister, as many critics have noted. Lepore argues that by interpreting the conflict as God's wrath being expressed through his instruments, the Indians, colonists did not have to look too closely at the real grievances which their Native American neighbours held against them (*Name of War*, p.119). Laura Stephens, in her thought-provoking discussion of the links between missionary accounts of dying Indians and later imperial nostalgia, agrees, and also points out that the connection with the settlement of the Promised Land is a connection with a time of total war and divinely-sanctioned genocide: 'This rhetorical brutality [of the King Philip's War texts] makes more sense when we see that it draws upon the parts of Deuteronomy that establish Israel's covenant through the enemy's destruction': while the Israelites were usually

²²⁰ Mary White Rowlandson, 'The sovereignty & goodness of God, together, with the faithfulness of his promises displayed; being a narrative of the captivity and restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson' (Cambridge, 1682), reprinted in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars 1675-1699* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913) 107-168; pp.115, 120, 133, 141

ordered to avoid waste and loss, she points out, when invading Canaan they were ordered to make total war, so that, for Mather at least, 'slaughtered Indians suggest God's favour.'²²¹

The use of biblical analogy is not limited, in these texts, to the times at which colonists fear they are losing the war. Frequent references are made to the Old Testament stories of Agag and Ahab, which differ from many of the points of reference in the jeremiads in that it deals with a situation in which the Israelites, in a position of power, deal with their conquered enemies. Both Ahab (dealing with the conquered Benhadad in I Kings 20.42) and Saul (dealing with Agag in I Samuel 15) are rejected and punished by God after their acts of mercy following a victory over their enemies. Ahab gives Benhadad his life in return for the return of captured cities and goods; and the prophet warns him that 'Thus saith the LORD, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people' (I Kings 20.42) Similarly, in 1 Samuel 15, Saul is told by the prophet Samuel that

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

(I Samuel 15.2-3)

In the battle, we are told that Saul and his people, although slaughtering Agag's people, spared the lives of their leader, along with 'the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good' (I Samuel 15.9). Although Saul tells Samuel that he has spared them in order to sacrifice them to God, Samuel enquires 'Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams... thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel' (I Samuel 15.22, 26). The episode ends with the captured Agag brought before the prophet: 'And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal' (I Samuel 15.33).

As you might expect, given the situation and power balances they depict, writers most frequently used these stories towards the end of the war, when the colonial forces were once again in a position of military dominance, although Rowlandson calls her captors 'Agag-like' (p.160) in reference to the earlier cruelty of the Biblical figure, rather than in reference to his death (except insofar as she implies that they will eventually be punished by God). As is often the case in these texts, the most sustained

²²¹ Stevens, Laura M, "The Christian Origins of the Vanishing Indian" in Nancy Isenberg and Andrew Burstein eds, *Mortal Remains: Death in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 17-30, p.24

and developed use of these images is in Increase Mather's highly biblically-influenced *A Brief History of the War*. Mather compares the mutilation of Philip's body after his death to being '[l]ike as Agag was hewed in pieces before the Lord' (p.139) and argues that to make peace with murderous enemies will cause God to turn from them:

we may fear that God, who so awfully threatned *Ahab*, when he had let go out of his hand a Blasphemous, Murderous Heathen, whom the Lord had devoted to destruction, was not well pleased with the English for concluding this, and other bloody Murders, in the late Eastern peace.

(p.140)

In other words, by framing Philip as Agag, or by warning the New England colonists that they will be following in the footsteps of Ahab if they make peace with their enemies, these writers are demanding that their readers interpret current events in the light of episodes in the Old Testament which legitimise violence, if not genocide. Choosing to pass over all the other points in the Bible in which mercy, love and forgiveness are celebrated, these writers warn their community that God will turn from them if their enemies are not 'utterly destroy[ed]... both man and woman, infant and suckling' (1 Samuel 15.3).

I will turn to this again when discussing the existence of 'moments of tension' in these texts later in the chapter; because one of the effects of this use of biblical analogy and mirroring by colonial writers is that the killing of non-combatants, which was traditionally frowned on by European conventions of battle, is reframed by the use of biblical mirroring like this as a divine mandate, a holy action to protect the new Israel. In doing so, it allows these colonial writers to deal with the effects of the savagery of their own actions, in a conflict in which they had imagined themselves to be the civilized side.

First, however, I want to point out the disturbing implications of the use of such Old Testament models as these, which allow writers such as Increase Mather, who was relatively sympathetic to the Praying Indians, to quote texts which suggest genocide as a model for the actions that the colonists should take against their enemies. Here, the division of Indians into praying and heathen, allies or enemies, has disappeared; the only division left is between the colonisers, God's chosen, and the enemies who surround them and want to destroy them. As Bercovitch puts it, 'the sacred characteristically defines itself through antithesis. The significance of 'holy land' depends on other lands not being holy; the chosenness of the chosen people implies their antagonism to the *goyim*, the profane 'nations of the earth'. Moreover, sacred history means the gradual conquest of the profane by the sacred' (p.178).

Such ideas follow on from the identification of the New England colonies as a type and mirror of the original Israel, an identification which, if accepted by readers, allowed writers during King Philip's War

to make these kinds of associations and thus portray the actions of the colonies in the light they wanted. They could then use this identification to make their point, whether that was one of excuse, warning, or a demand for action. And this identification of Israel with New England was very commonly accepted, an association which is confirmed by the fact that writers who opposed or criticised the colonial government. Such writers, rather than arguing that seeing the colonies as a new Israel was a ridiculous and arrogant identification, accepted the idea, but adapted it to change its implications and use it for their own rhetorical purposes, just as the writers discussed above used it for theirs.

This can be illustrated through an examination of S.G.'s *A glass for the people of New England*, which attacks the colonists for their intolerance and harsh treatment of dissenters, particularly Quakers. This text argues that the conflict has been brought on by 'your Pride and unequal Dealing with Dissenters in matters of Religion, and by your treacherous Practices towards the *Indians*, all which crieth very loud for Vengeance, however you may think to hide your selves with Flattering Printed Papers, yet your Filthiness doth appear and cannot be hid'.²²² This argument uses the orthodox colonial depiction of themselves as Israel, in a more physical and direct manner than was usual, in order to attack the colonists by re-interpreting this image to make the colonies, not the erring but chosen people of God, but the unregenerate rejecters of Christ. The writer argues that rather than being punished for being too lenient to their enemies and religious dissidents, as writers like Mather claimed, the colonists were in fact in the position of the Jews of the New Testament:

And therefore consider your selves, who have persecuted and do persecute the Righteous, whether you must not eat the Fruits of your own Doing; and whether the Lord is not doing so to you, as you did to his People: And are you not as blind as the *Jews*, that crucified Christ and called him a *Blasphemer*, and said, *Let his Blood be upon us and our Children?*

Did not Christ Weep over *Jerusalem*... when *Jerusalem* was Destroyed, and had not they then Blood to drink, who had drunk Blood?

And have not God's People wept, mourn'd, travail'd over you and for you, *New England Priests and Professors?*

(p.32)

By changing the way the same religious analogy is mirrored, by altering the implications of the comparison, S.G. rewrites the significance of the actions of the New England colonies, and as such

²²² S.G., *A Glass for the People of New England* ([London?], 1676) p.16

gives their actions a new interpretation.²²³ Significantly, the writer also seized on the idea of New England being a spiritual Israel to the Old Testament's physical one for his or her own purposes:

Oh! You Professors and Priests of *New England*, that the sun should go down on you, and be set, that you shou'd be to dark, and not see yourselves: for the *Jews* discerned not the Time of the Son's Coming in the Flesh, nor you the Time of his Coming in the Spirit.

(p.33)

In this quotation, S.G. turns the use of typology on its head, by suggesting that the New England colonists are the antitype of the Jews in their rejection of Christ. Whereas the colonial self-presentation was that they were the new nation of Israel, attempting to purify themselves of the heretical minority which had brought down the wrath of God upon them, S.G. puts the emphasis on the New rather than the Old Testament. Instead of the chosen people, the colonists become the Jews who failed to recognize the divinity of Christ and persecuted him. The cleverness of this analogy is that, rather than suggesting that the New England colonies are the new physical manifestation of Israel, it follows typological tradition in matching an older physical event to a more recent spiritual one. So the physical persecution of Christ by the Jews in the New Testament is now being mirrored, according to this interpretation, by the spiritual persecution of religious dissidents such as the Quakers, who are Christ's true followers in the modern world, by the modern equivalent of the Jews, the New England colonial authorities. This fear of being the equivalent of the chosen people whom God finally rejects echoes throughout the literature of King Philip's War, and is mirrored in the fear of being driven out of the colonies altogether, which seemed a real possibility at some stages of the war.

This fear clearly haunted the colonists. Increase Mather, in 'An Earnest Exhortation', draws an image of the land as being left 'desolate without an *English* inhabitants' as a threat of the worst which might come if the colonists do not repent their sins.²²⁴ Similarly, in Edward Bulkley's sermon, printed in Wheeler's *A Thankfull Remembrance of God's Mercy*, he sums up these warnings:

Fruitless Professors are near unto a Curse, and in danger of being plucked up or cut down, *Math 21,19, Heb.6.2*. If we bring forth not fruits of *mercies, deliverances, Ordinances, Afflictions*, if barren under all, the *Curse* may come, and God say *never fruit grow on you more.*; yea, God may cut us down by the *Axe* of his Judgements which he hath brought upon us, *Math 3.10*. Now God is laying the *Axe*, if not *to the Root*, yet he is *lopping off* many branches: and therefore the more need to take heed of *unfruitfulness*.

²²³ In this argument I am in agreement with Bozeman, who argues that Puritans tended to disagree not over whether to use Biblical archetypes to interpret experience, but over which were the correct archetypes to use (p.34)

²²⁴ Increase Mather, 'An Earnest Exhortation To the Inhabitants of New-England' (Boston, 1676) reprinted in Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom, eds, *So Dreadfull A Judgment: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War 1676-1677* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1978) 165-206, p.170

The *Jewes* were a *fruitless Vine* Christ layed the *Axe to the Root of the Tree*, &c.
Luk.13.7. *Cut it down*, &c. Would we not be cut down and cast into the Fire, let us be
Fruitful and that in due season.²²⁵

The really interesting point here is that across a range of writing – history, sermon, polemical pamphlet – and across a range of writers of different political and religious opinions, they share the same viewpoint. Rather than arguing in terms of the merits or demerits of particular positions, they view the events they experience through a defining filter of biblical interpretation. They understand their own lives as they are mirrored in the previous experience of their religious history. And as a result, the competition between viewpoints is to choose which particular aspect of biblical history to reflect your actions in, rather than choosing between different interpretative frameworks.

It is also interesting to note that the imagery of ‘mirrors’ appears far more often in the title of attacks on the Massachusetts and United Colonies governments than it does in titles of works defending their actions. Although both sets of texts use biblical frameworks to present their interpretations, and both sets have similarly polemical intentions, the critical texts make the fact that their works are trying to show readers how they should see themselves, rather than being purely an attempt to represent reality. The pro-colonial texts do much the same, but attempt not to draw attention to the fact that they are attempting to influence their readers with framing devices, preferring to let them seem to be an entirely natural interpretation of events.

Non-Biblical Symmetries: Creating Narratives from Events

Biblical framing narratives were not only used in these texts for polemical purposes, but also in an attempt to understand and interpret the events of the conflict in the first place, in an urgent, desperate search for truth. Colonists, under attack and watching their settlements destroyed and pushed back towards the coast, had to search for ways to reconcile reality with their mental positioning of themselves as the benevolent colonizers of the region, protected by an almighty God. They were concerned not only to defend themselves to their critics, but also to try to understand what was going wrong, so as to try to correct it. Some of the colonists, such as the soldier Benjamin Church, searched for practical ways to do this, including using the skills of Native American allies and adopting some of their military techniques in the colonial army. But many of the colonists who wrote about the war, and in particular the ministers who analysed it in sermons and histories, looked for religious explanations and patterns in order to understand why events took the form that they did. After all, they reasoned that God was omnipotent, and had previously given them easy victories over their enemies in the New

²²⁵ Edward Bulkley, ‘The Sermon’ in Thomas Wheeler, *A Thankfull Remembrance of God Mercy To several Persons at Quabaug or Brookfield* (Cambridge, 1676) 1-32 [Page numbering re-starts at the beginning of the sermon] p.26

World; if this was no longer the case, then the only possible explanation was that God was no longer protecting them.

It is interesting to note in particular the frequent use in these texts of the biblical quotation 'Vengeance is mine, saith the *Lord*; I will repay'. This links not only to the paralleling of historical event with biblical framing narrative in these texts, but also with a binary connection between the English colonists and their enemies which allows the writers to portray the English revisiting of 'savage' Indian actions as the symmetry of revenge. Put simply, these writers have a tendency to spot patterns of retribution returning in appropriate ways on the perpetrators, noting for example that 'as for their Treachery, God hath retaliated that upon them; as for the perfidious *Narragansets*, *Peter* Indian was false and perfidious to them, upon a disgust received amongst them, and directed our Army where to find them.'²²⁶ Many of the writers represented here take great satisfaction in reporting such occurrences and labelling them as the manifest justice of God, meant not only to defeat enemies but to humble the English with their own inadequacy compared to the divine ability to render appropriate dues. But this also allows English actions which might be seen as suspect – executing captives, enslavement, torture – to be seen as merely an appropriate retribution on a savage enemy: a kind of political version of the playground wail 'but he started it!'

At a basic level, the binary structure implied in the idea of mirroring is a simple and obvious one. Up and down, backwards and forwards, victory and defeat: these are all easily spotted patterns in the real world. As a result, ministers searching for signs of God's intentions and divine plan were able to pick out parallels and appropriate binaries in the events and people of the war in order to interpret them in some form of order, rather than randomly. They act as literary critics with the world as their text, spotting the patterns which will allow them to interpret the will of its author; and a large number of writers were desperate to find some form of order which would allow them to explain, react to and influence the course of the war. 'Various are Men's Thoughts why God hath suffered it, all acknowledge it was for sin,' wrote Richard Hutchinson.²²⁷ Many writers, particularly the ministers and non-military men who took no active part in the conflict, assert in these texts that there will be no physical winning of the war unless there is also a supernatural one; for example, Peter Folger warned against putting efforts into trying to improve the military rather than the moral state of the settlements:

'Tis like that some may think and say,
our War would not remain,
If so be that a thousand more
of Natives were but slain.
Alas! these are but foolish thoughts,

²²⁶ Increase Mather, *An Historical Discourse Concerning the Prevalency of Prayer* (Boston, 1677), p.6

²²⁷ R.H. 'The Warr in New-England Visibly Ended' (London, 1677) reprinted in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars 1675-1699* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913) 101-106, p.103

God can make more arise,
And if that there were none at all,
he can make War with Flys.

(p.19)

For those trying to make sense of the war, then, there was a powerful justification in the binary pattern provided by the war's downturn followed by upturn in the English fortunes, although depending on each author's politics, they identified the turning point as a different event, or even denied that there had been a real one, warning that there was more suffering to come in the future if the colonists did not truly repent.

This trauma of their apparent abandonment by God, and a desire to explain it, is one reason why this tendency to look for religious explanations appears much more in King Philip's War accounts than in earlier texts discussing the Pequot War. Another reason, I suggest, is that the structures of the two conflicts were different. The Pequot War was a much faster and more decisive event which the English could interpret as a single manifestation of enmity and victory – Jennings argues that 'To the English the experience seemed to prove that they could conquer Indians at will' – whereas the 1675-6 conflict was longer and more varied in the fortunes of the two sides (Jennings, p.227). In particular, the fact that the colonists did badly at first and then gradually regained the initiative and came gradually to dominate the conflict until its end meant that there was a simple structure of reversal which could be identified by commentators in hindsight, mirroring the first half of the war in the second as they attempted to understand why God had turned away from them and then returned to his people.

So, for example, the full title of Increase Mather's *Brief History* demonstrates this balancing and symmetry: *A Brief History of the Warr With the Indians in New-England, (From June 24, 1675, when the first English-man was murdered by the Indians, to August 12. 1676, when Philip, alias Metacomet, the principal Author and Beginner of the Warr, was slain.)* The murder of the 'English-man' that began the war is balanced by the death of Philip; the war is ended when its 'Author and Beginner' meets his end. Throughout the text, Mather goes on to point out symmetries throughout the conflict, which are considerably more complex than a simple 'act of virtue = victory for the English'. Instead, Mather points out how again and again days of fasting were matched by defeats or news of disasters for the English; he suggests that this is a deliberate message from God:

We have often carried it before the Lord as if we would *Reform* our wayes, and yet when it hath come to, we have done nothing: So hath the Lord carried toward us, as if he would deliver us, and yet hath deferred our Salvation, as we our selves have delayed *Reformation*.

(p.110)

Mather sees such symmetries and patterns, which can be observed by mankind, as messages from God, signs and hints which are intended to lead mankind in the right direction. He notes that

It is a common observation, verified by the experience of many Ages, that *great and publick Calamities seldom come upon any place without Prodigious Warnings to forerun and signify what is to be expected...* Certainly God would have such providences to be observed and recorded; He doth not send such things for nothing, or that no notice should be taken of them, And therefore was I willing to give a true account thereof.

(pp.124-6)

He identifies the turning point in the war as being the day of humiliation on which good, rather than bad, news is received; a sign that God has finally turned from anger and decided to accept their prayers and efforts. Other writers, such as Hubbard, also see a turning point, but emphasise more the fact that this is the point God has decided to support their efforts and allow them to succeed, and that now each suffering and punishment that was visited on them in the first half of the war will be mirrored by ones visited on their previous tormentors:

So after this day we may truly date the time of *our Deliverance*, and beginning of *Revenge* upon the Enemy: now is their own *turne come*, when it shall be *done unto them*, as they have served us: They that before *led others into Captivity*, must themselves hence forth *goe into Captivity*: And they that *killed with the Sword* must themselves be *killed with the Sword*.

(Hubbard, p.93)

As this quotation makes clear, one of the ways in which this mirroring structure worked was that it allowed English violence in the second part of the war to be interpreted as justified and appropriate vengeance, an eye for an eye. It also allowed writers to point out incidents when divine justice mirrored earlier enemy actions with appropriate punishments, which may have been delayed but are seen by the writer, in hindsight, to have been inevitable. So, the King Philip's War texts report cases in which English soldiers deliberately carry out actions which are, or which the writers of the texts report as being, deliberately appropriate mirroring of earlier actions by their enemies, to provide a kind of symmetry and thus 'justice'. So, for example, the newsletter *A Brief and True Narration of the late wars risen in New England* recounts how the English soldiers arrived in Philip's fort, 'where they found four English heads on poles, which they took down, placing four Indian heads in their places.'²²⁸

²²⁸ Anon., *A Farther Brief and True Narration of the Late Wars Risen in New-England* (London, 1676) p.5

The writers of these texts, however, are much more interested in portraying the matching of their enemies' 'crimes' with 'punishments' by a divine force, as opposed to describing soldiers taking revenge. This theme of God matching crime with appropriate punishment was present in these texts even before the fortunes of war turned in favour of the New England settlers, as writers urged the colonists to repent because the conflict was a sign of God's punishing them appropriately. For example, Mather argues in *An Earnest Exhortation* that

Consider how his Judgment is circumstanced, If we mind where it began and by what Instruments, we may well think that God is greatly offended with the Heathenisme of the English People. How many that although they are Christians in name, are no better then Heathens in heart, and in Conversation?

(pp.174-5)

In Mather's interpretation of the English defeats so far, God has set the heathen Indians to attack the English to punish the latter for behaving like heathens themselves. As the conflict progressed and the English became more militarily successful, however, writers were more likely to apply such reasoning to make their successes a mark of divine approval for them and a punishment for their enemies. Hubbard in particular notes such events, claiming a 'divine mandate' in the fact that Philip was at Mount Hope at the beginning and end of the war: 'what can be more just than that he should himself be killed, who lay in wait to kill another man? – *neque enim Lex justior ulla est/ Quam necis Artifices arte perire sua*' [There is no law more just than that which condemns a man to suffer death by the instrument which he has invented to take away the life of others] (*Earnest Exhortation*, pp.65-6). Similarly, Hubbard's verdict on Philip's death by another Indian is an Old Testament quotation: 'in him is fulfilled what was said in the Prophet, *Wo to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled, and dealest treacherously and they dealt not treacherously with thee; when thou shalt cease to spoil thou shalt be spoiled, and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee*, Isai 93.1' (pp.103-4).

Mather draws the same moral when he sees that those Indians who had previously taken English captives have now been captured and enslaved, quoting Psalms 68.18: 'Thus did they that had led into Captivity, go into Captivity; and they that killed with the Sword were themselves killed with the Sword' ('Brief History', p.122). He sees appropriate punishments in the fact that those who tortured were now being tortured in their turn by the Mohawks allied with the English, and that those who had 'betrayed' the English were now being betrayed in turn by their own. He also claims that the worst blasphemers among the enemies of the English have been examples of God's 'revenging justice', and provides an example which gives us an interesting illustration of how much desire there was for such divine symmetry to be manifested in the conflict. Mather reports a story demonstrating God's 'revenging justice' which is very similar to another story published the year before, and which seems

to be the same incident in a different form. The earlier version, printed in a news sheet in October 1676, which reported news dating up to 3 August of that year, runs as follows:

I am creditably informed that in the fight at *Sudbury*, an elderly *English* man endeavouring an Escape from the *Indians* by running into a Swamp, was overtaken by an *Indian*, and being destitute of Weapons to Defend himself or Offend him, the *Indian* exulted over him with that Blasphemous Expression [*Come Lord Jesus, save this poor English man if thou canst, whom I am now about to Kill.*] This (I even Tremble to Relate it) was heard by another *English* man, who was Hid in a Bush close by: Our Patient Long-suffering Lord, permitted that Bloody Wretch to Knock him down and leave him Dead. We hope the Lord is Arisen to Avenge those Blasphemies.²²⁹

This tale of unpunished blasphemy, which the writer obviously expects to make his readers tremble to read as he does to relate it, is echoed a year later in Mather's *Historical Discourse*:

It is also reported that an English-man, belonging to one of the western Plantations, being mortally wounded by an Indian, the Indian upbraided him with his prayers, saying to him, *You were wont to pray to Jesus Christ, now pray to him, He cannot help you*, and withall added a most hideous Blasphemy (not fit to be named) against our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, immediately upon which a bullet took him in the head, and dashed out his brains, sending his cursed soul in a moment amongst the Devils, and Blasphemers in Hell forever.

(p.7)

These two stories are close enough in details, although Mather's later account is much vaguer in details; he only locates the incident to a fight at 'one of the western Plantations' rather than a specific encounter at Sudbury. This suggests that the two stories are based on the incident, or possibly that Mather's later account is based on retellings of the first. The difference between the two stories is also obvious, with the first account gaining its force from the writer's horror that the Indian could successfully make such a claim and survive, while the second focuses on entirely the opposite point, that the enemy Indian is immediately punished for his blasphemy. At some point between these two tellings of the story in print, it has been rewritten to make it more appropriate, to make it fit the desire of writers for an appropriate matching of sin to punishment. Whether the details were rewritten by Mather himself, or whether they changed organically in the process of telling and retelling the story before it reached him is impossible to determine. But the important point is that the story of

²²⁹ Anon., *A True account of the most considerable occurrences that have hapned in the warre between the English and the Indians* (London, 1676) pp.2-3

blasphemy punished was such a powerful narrative in the colonies in the period that it did change and was rewritten, so that the altered version became the accepted one.

Depictions of Indian Mockery and Jealousy

This also leads to another form of mirroring as depicted in these texts, and one which allows this chapter to do something it has not yet attempted, and at least acknowledge the fact that these representations do not reflect the experience and intentions of the Native Americans who fought against the colonists during King Philip's War. As modern observers, we can recognise that far from colonial interpretations of them as mere instruments of God's will, they acted in the conflict from their own motives and reasons, and in accordance with their own cultural traditions, and although this is difficult to acknowledge in a chapter which deals largely with Puritan depictions of Native Americans for the purposes of their own identity formation, it is important to bear in mind that the Native Americans they depicted had specific aims and hopes which did not revolve round the colonists' vision of themselves as the centre of the narrative of the war.

Writers of the period, however, rarely acknowledge this.²³⁰ And often when they do, their depiction of the motives of their opponents is more a reflection of their own ideas, prejudices and anxieties than anything to do with an attempt to understand the circumstances of Native groups in the period. See, for example, Benjamin Tompson's depiction of Philip, with 'all the majesty his throne/ Of rotten stump, or of the rugged stone/ Could yield' (p.218), rousing his troops to begin the conflict with promises of what they will achieve:

Now if you fight I'll get you English coats,
And wine to drink out of their captains' throats.
The richest merchants' houses shall be ours,
We'll lie no more on mats or dwell in bowers.
We'll have their silken wives take they our squaws,
They shall be whipped by virtue of our laws.
(p.218)

Interestingly, not only are Philip and his men portrayed as being motivated by jealousy of the English lifestyle, aspiring to goods and a culture which are inaccessible to them except by violence; but this desire for material items, luxury and a lack of discipline is exactly what Tompson has just accused the

²³⁰ The Rhode Islanders Roger Williams and John Easton are honourable exceptions to this rule; both report the specific grievances of those of the enemy they discuss the conflict with. Swan, ed., 'A copy of a letter of Roger Williams'; John Easton, 'A Relation of the Indyan Warre, By Mr. Easton, of Roade Isl., 1675', reprinted in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars 1675-1699* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913) 1-18

modern New England colonists of craving, in comparison to their heroic forebears who sailed the Atlantic and founded the colonies. While the early colonists are depicted as living in an ideal religious state:

These golden times (too fortunate to hold)
Were quickly signed away for love of gold...
'Twas in those days an honest grace would hold
Til an hot pudding grew at heart a cold.
And men had better stomachs to religion
Than I to capon, turkey cock, or pigeon.
When honest sisters met to pray not prate
About their own and not their neighbors' state...
Although men fared and lodged very hard
Yet innocence was better than a guard...
No sooner pagan malice peeped forth
But valor snibbed it; then were men of worth
Who by their prayers slew thousands angel-like,
Their weapons are unseen with which they strike...
(pp.215-6)

Now, by implication, the settlers have become soft, spoiled and have neglected religion, but Tompson pictures them once again taking up a hardy and religious lifestyle in response to the crisis:

These tidings ebbing from the outward parts
Makes tradesmen cast aside their wonted arts
And study arms [...]
Heavens they consult by prayer, the best design
A furious foe to quell or undermine [...]
[...] doleful shrieks of captives summon forth
Our walking castles, men of noted worth,
Made all of life, each captain was a Mars...
(pp.219-20)

The poem's depiction of Philip promising his men soft European luxuries is the counterpoint to a narrative of the English colonists abandoning such a lifestyle and reclaiming their virtue, proving themselves to have maintained the standards of the idealised early colonists. The English are virtuous, while their enemies become identified with the sins the colonists have previously been reproached for. Although, as I said before, Tompson tends to use much more classical imagery than

other writers in the period, he does share a similar approach to depicting their Native American opponents. Their enemies are deprived of their separate identities, their grievances and their status as independent actors; instead, their place in the poem is as physical manifestations of the English weakness and sins. In combating them, the English win a battle more against themselves than against their enemies – although this does not stop Tompson from blaming Philip and his allies entirely for the death and destruction brought about by the conflict.

Clearly, Tompson's portrayal of Philip's motivations, quoted above, has little to do with genuine Indian grievances; in fact, the critic Peter White argues that Tompson's depiction of the Native Americans is so exoticised, despite his geographical proximity to them, that it appears more likely that he was writing from European books than from his own observations.²³¹ Commentators who genuinely had some experience in talking about Algonquian life and culture, like Roger Williams, never portray them as being envious of the English or their goods, or having any desire to take on their lifestyles. Rather, Williams notes that not only do they have their own customs, which are often more effective than those of the colonists, but they also find it difficult to adapt to European conventions:

Obs. Our English clothes are so strange unto them, and their bodies inured so to indure the weather, that when (upon gift &c.) some of them have had *English* cloathes, yet in a showre of raine, I have seen them rather expose their skins to the wet than their cloaths, and therefore pull them off, and keep them drie.

Obs. While they are among the *English* they keep on the *English* apparell, but pull of all, as soone as they come againe into their owne Houses, and Company.²³²

Although Williams was writing some thirty years earlier, the Praying Indian conversion narratives from only a few years before King Philip's War also display little desire among the Indians to adopt English culture; in fact, as discussed in chapter two, most of their comments on the subject suggest that they found it difficult and traumatic to make such changes when missionaries asked them to. Tompson's text, in attempting to portray his enemies' motivations as shallow and greedy, instead betrays his own concerns about the declension of New England colonial values and a fear, as mentioned above, of being replaced by the Indians in New England.

The critic Kristina Bross also notes these tensions and concerns in Tompson's poem, but interprets them very differently, arguing that Tompson's portrayal of an Indian desire for colonial goods 'is fully intelligible only with reference to the figure of the Praying Indian', and should be understood in the context of previous portrayals of Philip in print, in texts such as John Eliot's *Indian Dialogues* (Bross,

²³¹ Peter White, "Cannibals and Turks: Benjamin Tompson's Image of the Native American" in Peter White ed, *Puritan Poets and Poetics: Seventeenth-Century American Poetry in Theory and Practice* (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985)

²³² Roger Williams, Roger, *A Key into the Language of America: or, An help to the Language of the Natives in that part of America, called New-England* (London, 1643) p.121

p.173). She believes the poem represents an attempt to undermine previous portrayals of Christian Indians taking on English marks of 'civilisation': 'English clothing becomes the booty for covetous Indian forces rather than the reward for pious Indian converts' (p.169). Bross concludes that by putting attacks on expansion and missionaries into Philip's mouth, Thompson attempts to discredit them (Bross, p.173). This interpretation is an interesting one, but it puts too much emphasis on colonial interest in the Praying Indians. The colonists found it easy to believe that the Native Americans in the region coveted their possessions and lifestyles; to believe anything else would have meant accepting that their own way of life was not self-evidently preferable. Such a belief did not have to be grounded in representations of Praying Indians in the period; the colonists' understanding of their place in New England placed themselves so firmly at the centre of the narrative that the Praying Indians could only be seen as reacting to them.

At the same time, these texts again and again betray this fear, expressed in Philip's vision of the results of an Indian victory, of being not only killed and the colonies destroyed; but more specifically of being *replaced*. Why was this such a potent fear for the writers of the King Philip's War texts? Perhaps the reason was related to the biblical background of the jeremiads mentioned above; although Israel was the chosen nation of God, they were punished through being exiled from their promised land and their place taken by others; until, the colonists believed, God finally turned from them when the new spiritual church of Christianity was founded. An alternative explanation could read the fear as being born from guilt over the manner in which Algonquian land had been acquired; the writers often protest a little too much about how fair they have been in their purchases, and concerns surface in other texts that the conflict may have been provoked by Indian jealousy of English *improvement* of their land. Examples can be seen in *A Brief and True Narration* and also in N.S.'s first newsletter, *The Present State of New-England*:

The English took not a Foot of Land from the Indians, but Bought all, and although they bought for an inconsiderable Value; yet they did Buy it. And it may be judged that now King Philip repents himself, seeing what Product the English have made of a Wilderness, through their Labour, and the Blessing of God thereon.

(*'Present State'*, p.26)

In this case, it was presumably easier to believe that Indian jealousy was due to the 'improvement' of the land by the English, rather than the fact that it had been acquired by ruthless and exploitative means. Emphasising Indian greed allowed English writers to approach the topic of Indian motivations without portraying their own actions in a bad light.

Another interesting repeated theme in these texts is descriptions of Wampanoag and Narragansett warriors who mock the English by imitating their speech, phrases, or actions, mirroring them but

skewing the representation. This is particularly interesting, because unlike most of the depictions of Indians discussed above, it is not based on the writer's imagination, but largely on observation and reporting. Furthermore, the writers often react to such actions with bewilderment as well as shock and anger. For example, in N.S.'s first newsletter, we read the following account of the build-up to the outbreak of hostilities:

About the 20th of June last, Seven or Eight of King Philip's Men came to Swansey on the Lords Day, and would grind a Hatchet at an Inhabitants House there; and the Master told them, it was the Sabbath Day, and their God would be very angry if he should let them do it. They returned this Answer, they knew not who his God was, and that they would do it for all him, or his God either... [a short time after] they met a Man travelling on the Road, kept him in Custody a short time, then dismiss him quietly; giving him this Caution, that he should not work on his God's Day, and that he should tell no Lies.

These Things happening, with many others of the like Nature, gave the Reheboth and Swansey Men great Cause of Jealousies...

(*'Present State'*, p.27)

Again, Wheeler recounts in *A Thankfull Remembrance* the reaction of the besiegers of the fortified house he and his men are occupying to shouts of encouragement,

with these and the like words, That *God is with us, and fights for us, and will deliver us out of the hands of these Heathen*; which Expressions of his the *Indians* hearing, they *shouted and scoffed* saying: now see how *your God delivers you, or will deliver you*, sending in many shots whilst our men were putting out the Fire....²³³

The next day, the Indians increase the effect of their tactics:

The next day being *August 3d*, they continued *shooting and shouting*, & proceeded in their *former wickedness blaspheming the Name of the Lord*, and *reproaching us his Afflicted Servants*, scoffing at our prayers as they were sending in their shot upon all quarters of the house And many of them went to the Towns *meeting house* (which was within *twenty Rods* of the House in which we were) who mocked saying, *Come and pray, & cing Psalms*, & in Contempt made an hideous noise *somewhat resembling singing*.

(p.249)

²³³ Thomas Wheeler, 'A Thankfull Remembrance of Gods Mercy To Several Persons at Quabaug or Brookfield' (Cambridge, 1676) reprinted in Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom, eds, *So Dreadfull A Judgement: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War 1676-7*, (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press) 237-57, p.247

The mockery, and the attempt to show the English that they hold them and their culture in contempt, come though clearly; which, apart from any other considerations, negates the idea expressed (sometimes in the same texts) that they are jealous of the English lifestyle. The description of the inhabitants of Rehoboth and Swansey having 'great Cause of Jealousies' as a result of such actions is an interesting one. The word 'jealousy' in the period could mean 'Solicitude or anxiety for the preservation or well-being of something; vigilance in guarding a possession from loss or damage'; this suggests that such Indian mimicry of English religion was seen as deeply threatening to colonial Christianity and culture.

What were the intentions of the Native Americans described carrying out these actions? The first quotation, from *The Present State of New-England*, seems to suggest a direct reaction by the Indian protagonists: denied from doing what they want by one Englishman, they turn his words on another one. But the accounts of the use of such imitations during a battle in Wheeler's text suggest that the same tactic is being used deliberately to goad the English, and attempt to get them to expose themselves outside the fortified house in their anger and attempt to revenge the insult to their God and religion. Hilary Wyss has argued that these tales of Native American contempt are signs of the colonists' fears that they are losing the conflict to an unexpectedly powerful enemy, and that these stories are evidence of them rewriting their humiliation as horror at the sacrilege of their enemies (p.33). If this is true, it suggests that the Indian warriors here knew the best way to insult and anger the English they were fighting, because such demonstrations did indeed infuriate their opponents, even if they were in this case unsuccessful.

It also suggests that the Native American soldiers were, far from being merely instruments of God's retribution, not only well aware of the culture of those they were attacking and its sore spots, but also aware that what would infuriate the English most was an *insincere* imitation of their cultural actions. The English fear of hypocrisy and false appearances, and of Indian converts exploiting English vulnerabilities in order to get material advantages from them, could well have been observed by the inhabitants of the Praying Towns who decided to fight alongside Philip rather than the English. And although we can never recover the motivations of the Native Americans described in these English texts, we can theorise further that if there were praying Indians present, they might even have been aware how deeply such a suggestion would hurt the English.

Moments of Tension

Throughout this chapter, I have been trying to explore the ways in which Puritan writers in the New England colonies attempted to fit the events of King Philip's War into narrative structures, both biblical and more generally structural (like the symmetries of crime/punishment and attack/revenge), and thus

make sense of a conflict which did not take place as they were expecting, and which was vastly more destructive and bloody than they can have anticipated at the outbreak of hostilities. In the final part of this chapter, I want to turn to the way these writers portray incidents that reveal the New England colonists to have carried out exactly the same type of actions which they accuse their 'savage' opponents of carrying out, and which they used elsewhere as a way of demarcating their 'civilized society' from the 'barbarism' of their Native American opponents. I will argue that the King Philip's War writers do not flinch from recording and even publicising these actions, but expect their readers to also accept them, without making connections between such incidents and colonial claims to 'civilization'. One, admittedly extreme, example of the type of incident I will discuss is from a postscript to a letter by Samuel Moseley during the conflict, in which he notes how they dealt with an Indian woman they captured and questioned: 'This aforesaid Indian was ordered to be torn in peeces by Doggs and she was soe dealt with all.'²³⁴ Such offhand statements are deeply shocking to the modern reader, but are mentioned casually and openly in the sources.

While Slotkin and Folsom note that colonial wars in New England were ferocious, including not only King Philip's War but also the earlier Pequot War, it should be taken into consideration that the seventeenth century was a particularly bloody and warlike period in Europe, as well as America ('Introduction' in *So Dreadfull*, pp.3-4). One historian has argued that 'in terms of its belligerency the seventeenth century was outstripped only by the twentieth' (Tallett, p.13). Several critics have argued that, horrific as English actions were, they were no worse than those carried out in European countries, particularly in Ireland; Kupperman also argues that the killing of women and children was an accepted fact of European war in a way that it was not in Indian conflicts (Kupperman, 212-240).

To some extent this is true; one historian of European warfare in the early modern period, Tallett, argues that although in general soldiers who surrendered and non-combatants such as women would not be massacred, there were always times when this rule was not kept, including on the breaking of a siege, or when soldiers were carried away in the heat of battle (Tallett, pp.128-9). Parker, in *Empire, War and Faith* discusses the Laws of War in Europe, which coalesced into the Articles of War between 1550 and 1700.²³⁵ These generally protected women and children, although he agrees with Tallett that there were still occasional massacres (Parker, pp.151-2). However, Tallett also singles out certain types of warfare as being more bitter and protracted: in particular, war in Eastern Europe, where 'opponents were considered to be less than human' while in Ireland such violence was justified by the guerrilla tactics of the Irish (Tallett, pp.16, 129). Parker agrees, arguing that in Ireland, Africa and America the laws of war were believed not to apply, indigenous enemies being considered outside their scope either because they were pagans, or because they were considered racially inferior (Parker, pp.165-6). Religious antagonisms are also highlighted as a cause for especially bitter

²³⁴ Letter quoted in George M. Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War* (Boston, 1891), p.69

²³⁵ Parker, Geoffrey, *Empire, War and Faith in Early Modern Europe* (London: Penguin, 2002) pp.146-7

fighting by Tallett: 'there was a steady stream of apologists, asserting the case for an offensive war in the cause of religion', especially in England in the 1620s and 1630s (Tallett, p.241). Parker agrees that 'some of the worst recorded excesses involved soldiers of one creed butchering those of another', and, significantly, notes that '[f]urthermore, the victors normally justified these and other similar deeds with the rhetoric of messianic imperialism buttressed by the examples of severe chastisement of unbelievers to be found in the Old Testament' (Parker, pp.153-4).

Of course, a dedication to an overtly peaceful religion has never been a barrier to violence, nor can we, after the horrors of the twentieth century, make any casual assumptions about 'civilization' being opposable to a willingness to cause suffering. In fact Kibbey, in her book *The Interpretation of Material Shapes in Puritanism*, argues that prejudice and violence against the other was rationalised and strongly interconnected with theological ideas in Puritanism. While Kibbey looks at the Pequot War rather than King Philip's War, her emphasis on the fact that because Indians were seen as being outside the rules of war, Puritans saw themselves as legally able to kill them and did so enthusiastically should be kept in mind when considering some of the actions taken in King Philip's War.²³⁶

That these writers were able to report their massacring of Native American non-combatants so openly, while at the same time condemning the attacks of their enemies as evidence of their savage barbarity is intriguing, and I agree with the critic Stephen Greenblatt that this must be connected to, and therefore revealing of, the ways in which the colonists constructed their identities:

The possession of weapons and the will to use them on defenceless people are cultural matters that are intimately bound up with discourse: with the stories that a culture tells itself, its conception of personal boundary and liability, its whole collective system of rules.²³⁷

I want to argue that there are particular moments when colonial writers report events which undermine their own claims to be the less brutal, more 'civilised' force in the region, and that although these moments are reported openly and without apparent shame, there are still elements in the texts which suggest that these are 'moments of tension' for the writers. By looking at these incidents in detail, I hope to try to identify the stories Puritan culture was telling itself, and to try to explain how they not only justified such actions to themselves, but were able to reconcile them with their worldview of themselves as civilized, moral and just.

²³⁶ Ann Kibbey, *The Interpretation of Material Shapes in Puritanism: A Study of Rhetoric, Prejudice, and Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) p.100

²³⁷ Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) p.64

I will begin by giving some examples of how these moments of tension appear in the texts. The first thing to note is that these writers seem remarkably blind to the obvious parallels between the behaviour they are condemning, and the behaviour of the English they recount. So, for example, the full title of Tompkinson's poem declares that his work is *a true narrative of New-Englands lamentable estate at present, occasioned by many un-heard of cruelties, practised upon the persons and estates of its united colonies, without respect of sex, age or quality of persons by the barbarous heathen thereof*. But after having read the rest of the text, this title would seem to be a fairly accurate description of the English actions described in it. Although there are many moments when this text and others describe such English actions, I want to concentrate on one in particular: the attack on the Narragansett fort in the Great Swamp on 19 December 1675, in which the English surprised it, burnt it, and slaughtered a large number of the inhabitants. This action recalls closely the events the English condemned when the English towns were attacked during the conflict; although the English often complained that Native American military tactics were treacherous and didn't follow the rules of war, in their own attack on the Great Swamp Fort they not only followed local, rather than European, practice, in launching a surprise attack on a fortified camp containing women and children as well as soldiers – something which they bitterly condemned Philip and his allies for doing when attacking outlying towns – but in fact went further. Rather than capturing the women and children who survived the attack, as their Indian enemies tended to do, they also killed them or left them to die of exposure, a practice closer to European concepts of war, which accepted that a town taken by storm would often be the scene of a massacre.²³⁸

Such actions lead to moments of tension in the texts, because despite their apparent unwillingness to accept that they are in any way problematic, there are signs of the writers using particular tactics within the texts in an attempt to deal with the implications of what they are describing. The Great Swamp Fight is a particularly good example of one of these moments of tension, because it was an important event in the conflict and was reported then or afterwards by numerous writers; and also because the events which took place were so traumatic, involving a large-scale massacre by the English. To begin with, I want to quote the accounts of the fight as printed in several different writers, which can then be discussed. Firstly, Ben Tompkinson's 'poetic' account.

Sundry the flames arrest and some the blade,
 By bullets heaps on heaps of Indians laid.
 The flames like lightning in their narrow streets
 Dart in the face of everyone it meets.
 Here might be heard an hideous Indian cry,
 Of wounded ones who in the wigwams fry.

²³⁸ For discussion of the military background to these rules, see Tallett, p.128; J.R.Hale, *War and Society in Renaissance Europe, 1450-1620* (London and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985) pp.193-4; Parker, pp.154-5; Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2000)

Had we been cannibals here might we feast
On brave Westphalia gammons ready dressed.
The tawny hue is Ethiopic made
Of such on whom Vulcan his clutches laid.

(‘New-Englands Crisis, p.224)

A less poetic description, from the anonymous newsletter *A Farther Brief and True Narration*:

On the 19th, although it was Sunday, our Men thought they could not serve God Better than to require Justice of the *Indians* for the Innocent Blood which had been so oft by those [...] Salvages shed; and we were chearfully ready (as so many Sampsons) to forgo our own lives to be revenged on these *Philistines*, that had made Sport with our miseries... we fired about 500 *Wigwams*, (i.e. *Indian Houses*) and killed all that we met with of them, as well *Squaws* and *Papooses*, (i.e. Women and Children) as *Sanups* (i.e. *Men*) [...] every one had their fill of Blood: it did greatly rejoice our Men to see their Enemies, who had formerly sculked behind Shrubs and Trees, now to be engaged in a fair Field, where they had no defence but in their Arms, or rather their Heels; But our chiefest Joy was to see they were mortal, as hoping their death will revive our Tranquillity, and once more restore us to a settled Peace which (through the Blessing of God) we have long enjoy'd. [...] We have slain of the Enemy about 500 fighting men, besides those who were burnt in their *Wigwams*, and Women and Children the number of which we took no account of.

(pp.9-10)

Finally, Hubbard does not describe the death of the Indians so graphically; he concentrates on the struggles and suffering of the colonial soldiers attempting to break in. When he reports on the state of their opponents within, he says

It is reported by them that first entred the *Indians Fort*, that our Soldiers came upon them when they were ready to dress their Dinner; but our sudden and unexpected assault put them besides that work, making their Cookrooms too hot for them at that time, when they and their Mitchin fried together: and probably some of them eat their Suppers in a colder place that night: most of their Provisions as well as their Hutts being then consumed with fire; and those that were left alive, forced to hide themselves in a Cedar Swamp, not far off, where they had nothing to defend them from the cold but Boughs of Spruce and Pine trees [...] What numbers of the Enemy were slain is uncertain; it was confessed by one Pot[ao]ck, a great Councillor amongst them, afterwards taken at *Road-Island*, and put to death at *Boston*, that the *Indians* lost Seven hundred fighting men that day, besides

Three hundred that died of their Wounds the most of them: the number of old men, women and children, that perished either by fire, or that were starved with hunger or cold, none of them could tell. There were above Eighty of the English slain, and a Hundred and fifty wounded, that recovered afterwards.

(Hubbard [London printing], pp.53-4)

The writers of these texts can be seen in these quotations to be using many of the techniques of mirroring discussed in this chapter, as well as some new examples. All of them are aimed at defusing the tensions created by the actions being reported, and betray an uncomfortableness with the situation.

Firstly, there is the use in the newsletter of an Old Testament lens to focus the reader's view of the situation. The newsletter reports that the soldiers are 'cheerfully ready (as so many Sampsons) to forgo our own lives to be revenged on these *Philistines*'. Not only does this suggest the heroism and strength of the English soldiers in a flattering light through the comparison to an Old Testament hero; the reference to forgoing their own lives for revenge also puts them in the position of almost passive victims, in the position of the blinded and helpless Samson at the end of his life, who can only destroy his enemies through his own death. Despite the fact that the English have actively tracked down this fort and made great efforts to get to it in the winter snows, the subtle implication is that they have been brought here and are reacting to the situation their enemies have placed them in; they are victims, not aggressors. Interestingly, this reference to Samson follows the description of how 'although it was Sunday, our Men thought they could not serve God Better than to require Justice of the *Indians*'. Like the depiction of the attack as a passive response of a victim, this puts the moral emphasis of the passage on the fact that there was a debate about whether it would be right to attack on the Sabbath, rather than right to attack at all – this remains unquestioned, and in fact becomes a religious action, a way to serve God's will.

Secondly, although the writers never see, or refuse to acknowledge, the similarities between this attack and those on the English settlements, they do mirror the depictions of their opponents in strange and unexpected ways. In particular, one leaps out at the reader: Tompson's response to the burning of men, women and children in the fire, that '[h]ad we been cannibals here might we feast'. Such a response, at once both callous and yet also flirting with a depiction of the English engaging in an activity which they took as a benchmark of barbarism, seems bizarre. Why, in this moment in which Tompson recorded the violence of the English soldiers – in fact, immediately after the line in which the screaming of the dying is evoked in the poem – did he then emphasize the ambiguous morality of their actions (to say the least) with this hint that the English do, indeed, think in the same way as the 'savages' they accused their enemies of being? The poem is not an attack on the soldiers involved in the massacre; Tompson does criticise certain actions of the colonies, but he is

unquestionably loyal to them against their Native American opponents throughout his verse. And this comment, with all its callous horror, echoes the sudden cruel detail in Hubbard's generally much more measured reporting, that 'our sudden and unexpected assault put them besides that work, making their Cookrooms too hot for them at that time, when they and their Mitchin fried together'.²³⁹ Here, too, the attack is reported in terms of a twist on the idea of cooking food and cooking human flesh; and while Hubbard is more subtle than Thompson, it also seems that the play on words with the idea of their cookrooms being 'too hot for them at that time' implies a joke between Hubbard and his readers. Similarly, Thompson's line could be seen to be intended as a joke, especially as it is followed by the grotesque comparison of the dead Indians to 'brave Westphalia gammons ready dressed.'

Jonathan Glover, in his book *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*, argues for the existence of something he calls a 'cold joke'. He argues such cold jokes are used by those carrying out torture and other atrocities to dehumanise their subjects and distance themselves from their own actions:

The cold joke mocks the victims... It adds emphasis to the difference between 'us' and 'them': we the interrogators are a group who share a joke at the expense of you the victims. It is also a display of hardness: we are so little troubled by feelings of sympathy that we can laugh at your torment; but the display may be a clue that the suppression of sympathy is not so easy and needs help... [in the case of those who do not directly confront the victims, the cold joke can also be] more a device by which businessmen and technicians do not have to face up to precisely what they are doing... The cold joke is a display of power over its victims. It is also a way of easing the conscience, both by making light of what is done and by a flaunting display of the joker's own hardness in the face of the claims of compassion... The cold joke is related to desecration. When victims are seen as less than human, the murderers find it hard to treat their remains with respect.²⁴⁰

Although this discussion is concerned with the twentieth century, and primarily with those carrying out torture and other atrocities rather than writing about them later, Glover's discussion can help explain the reasons for some of the features in these King Philip's War texts which to the modern reader appear horrific. If the quasi-cannibalistic comments are taken as being intended to be jokes, the writers can be seen here to be attempting to dehumanise the dying men, women and children through the suggestion of the idea of English cannibalism; the dying bodies are turned into nothing more than cooking meat, by Thompson into 'brave Westphalia gammons', Hubbard by his description of how 'they and their Mitchin fried together'. The attempt at a joke also, as Glover argues, can be seen as trying

²³⁹ Mitchin comes from an English word, Mitch, meaning a small loaf, rather than being a use of Algonquian vocabulary here. OED entry for 'Mitch, n.1' and 'Mitchkin', accessed 17.06.2010 on www.oedonline.com

²⁴⁰ Glover, Jonathan, *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1999) pp.36-7, 340-2

to ease the conscience and demonstrate indifference to the suffering of their enemies by making light of what has happened, turning it into no more than something to laugh at; Glover also emphasises that 'Atrocities are easier if the human responses are weakened [...] One way is to stress that victims do not belong' (p.35). The historian Parker also makes this point, in his discussion of the development of state propaganda in the early modern period: he argues that 'an important aim of state-sponsored propaganda before and during war is specifically to destroy any sense of identification with the enemy by dehumanizing all adversaries so that they can be killed, mutilated and otherwise mistreated with a clear conscience' (Parker, p.165). He notes that this was applied particularly by Europeans in the period to native Irish and to African and Native American adversaries, who were seen as a group 'to whom the Laws of War did not apply' (Parker, p.165).

However, I would suggest that the use of the image of cannibalism as a way of making a joke of events also suggests an obvious deeper unease with the situation. Under the appearance of a joke – because of the ridiculousness of imagining that the civilized New England colonists could possibly be involved in cannibalism – there is a fear in these texts that the English are becoming like their own stereotype of the savagery of their enemies, an idea which has been explored by Slotkin in *Regeneration Through Violence*. Slotkin argues that Thompson's poem suggests a desire to take on Indian strength while feeling repulsion at the means necessary to do so. While I agree with his argument that the colonists saw Indians as a darkened and inverted mirror image of themselves, a warning of what they might become, this is not how I interpret this passage. Rather, I see the depiction of the Native Americans as meat as being an attempt to dehumanise them, to defuse the tension of the scene and lessen any sympathy the reader might have had for the colonial forces' victims (Slotkin, *Regeneration*, pp.88-91; Slotkin and Folsom, *So Dreadfull*, pp.35-9).

Another method by which the writers of these texts attempt to dehumanise the Native Americans they describe as being massacred uses another technique of mirroring. Like the texts discussed earlier, where Indians are depicted as jealous of English civilisation and trying to imitate it, but only achieving a grotesquely flawed mimicry, these quotations show how the English block out Indian suffering by portraying victims as grotesque rather than as fully human. While Thompson has recorded many English screams with pity and indignation, here the dying give out a 'hideous Indian cry' – the syntax suggesting that the hideousness is connected to the fact they are Indians, rather than the fact they are burning to death.

Similarly, Thompson's depiction of the effects of the burning are to say that 'The tawny hue is Ethiopic made/ Of such on whom Vulcan his clutches laid.' There is a disturbing hint here of a desire to alienate the reader through a depiction of skin colour. Many writers had argued that the Indians had essentially the same skin colour as Europeans at birth, but became darker through exposure to the weather and use of grease that stained the skin; but here, Thompson uses the blackening effect of fire

to portray the dead as having 'Ethiopic' skin. The suggestion is that this is intended to alienate the reader, to suggest that these victims are not to be identified with but are set apart. It may also be connected with an idea, dating back to Aristotle, that darkness of skin was a sign of those God had decreed to be inferior and required to submit; Bercovitch argues that 'by the time King Philip's War broke out the Indians were unequivocally identified with the doomed 'dark brothers' of scripture – Cain, Ishmael, Esau, and above all the heathen natives of the promised land, who were to be dispossessed by divine decree of what really belonged to God's chosen' (Bercovitch, p.75) I remain unconvinced that the idea of skin colour was directly related to the racism that developed and was directed at Native Americans during King Philip's War, since this is one of the few direct references to it in the conflict that I have encountered, and as discussed earlier, many historians warn against projecting racism back into the early modern period. At the least, though, Tompson's poem emphasises the difference in the appearance of the Native American enemies of the colonies, in an attempt to decrease (white) reader empathy. Furthermore, Tompson's imagery is interesting in light of the fact that this idea was available to him, and may suggest that such ideas may have been developing in the period.

The same effect is seen in the references to the deaths of women and children as well as soldiers. Hubbard glosses over this, acknowledging the deaths in combat of the men – 'the *Indians* lost Seven hundred fighting men that day, besides Three hundred that died of their Wounds the most of them' – but refusing to give any figures of non-combatants who died, and subtly suggesting that their deaths were accidental, due to fire and exposure after the battle rather than direct English actions: 'the number of old men, women and children, that perished either by fire, or that were starved with hunger or cold, none of them could tell'. The newsletter, on the other, which has a much more crudely triumphalist tone, reports that 'we fired about 500 *Wigwams*, (i.e. *Indian Houses*) and killed all that we met with of them, as well *Squaws* and *Papooses*, (i.e. Women and Children) as *Sanups* (i.e. Men)'. While this writer does not shrink, as Hubbard does, from depicting the English soldiers actively killing women and children, the use of the Indian words here – although translated for the English audience of the text, who would be less likely to be familiar with them – acts to dehumanise the dying: they are not women and children, they are the more exotic, less empathetic '*Squaws* and *Papooses*'. By naming them differently, this writer again denies them the equivalent of English humanity and thus the sympathy of his readers.

This effect is also seen in the newsletter writer's assertion that 'our chiefest Joy was to see they were mortal, as hoping their death will revive our Tranquillity'. This emphasis on the idea that the English soldiers only now discover that their enemies are mortal hints at colonial depictions of the Native Americans as being devils or witches, linking back to the idea, discussed earlier, that they are not fighting for their own reasons, but only as passive instruments of God; the effect throughout is to

dehumanise them, to make them symbols, instruments, divine tools – anything rather than normal, feeling, suffering human beings.

Finally, there is a use of the idea of mirroring of actions: as the Indians caused the English pain, so this is 'justice', as *A Farther Brief and True Narration* puts it. And as the Indians won when they used their underhand tactics and 'sculked behind Shrubs and Trees' to ambush the English, so, now the English have brought them to 'be engaged in a fair Field', they not only lose the battle, but actually run away: 'they had no defence but in their Arms, or rather their Heels' as the writer puts it.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have looked at the rhetorical strategies by which the New England colonists who wrote about King Philip's War attempted to guide the judgements of their readers. These texts are strongly polemical, with few attempts at objective reporting; every writer pursues a specific aim, whether it is to support the colonies, to berate them for the sinfulness which is causing the conflict, or to suggest that they are the persecutors of true Christianity and that this is their punishment. The methods used by writers related overwhelmingly to the Bible, either involving seeing the conflict through the lens of Old Testament history, in order to suggest appropriate interpretations of the history of New England as the New Israel; or alternatively, seeing patterns to try to interpret the will of God, and confirm that he was carrying out justice on the Indians in the second half of the war for the punishments he had used them to carry out on the colonists in the first. At other times these writers suggest that the Indians are motivated by greed, a desire to be like the English which can only make them grotesque and twisted images of the colonists; and deny that there are obvious similarities between the two sides, making jokes and using distancing techniques to make the Indians seem less than human and not to be pitied.

Images of mirroring, of seeing the other in a 'glass', of reflections and echoes and parallels, abound in these texts in ways they don't in earlier accounts of the Pequot War. I suggest that this is due to several historical circumstances which characterised this conflict: increased pressure for land; increased fear and hatred driven by the much longer and bloodier hostilities; and greater English dominance in the region which allowed them to develop contempt for other groups around them. In short, in this conflict, the English had more at stake in denying their enemies a common humanity. In using images of mirroring, these writers rewrite their enemies as merely reflections, rather than real people. In making their Native American enemies instruments of God's wrath, and their eventual fate a demonstration of divine justice and power; in making them grotesque shadows of the English, longing to appropriate English culture but unable to achieve this; in making them symbolic of the dark side of English culture which must be banished, as opposed to an independent people and culture in

their own right; in doing all this, these writers rewrite their enemies to be what they often call them, again quoting the old Testament: 'those who are not a people'.

This viewpoint goes far beyond King Philip's War, important as it was to representations of that conflict. In declaring that Native American groups to be 'those who are not a people', these writers deny them selfhood and put them at the fringes of the narrative of New England history. Rather than equal adversaries, they become mere foils lurking round the edges of the triumphant narrative of New England colonial success, the marginal people seen on the edges of the history of the New Israel. Their land and lives can be taken, because they are no longer seen as important in themselves; their only role is as antagonists, inevitably to be conquered, in the ongoing history of the triumphant expansion of the English colonies in the region. And from a twenty-first century vantage point, we can see that this was a narrative which continued to dominate; which in fact still dominates today.

In this chapter, I have looked at direct representations and depictions of King Philip's War by those who were involved in it, and the ways in which they attempted to write the narrative of the conflict so as to keep themselves at the centre of the story and to make themselves victims, rather than aggressors, in the story of the war. In my final chapter, I will return to the focus on depictions of foreign languages and translation with which I began this thesis, and discuss the ways in which portrayals of Indian language are used by writers during King Philip's War to create and display individual identity, rather than the national or group identity which this chapter has focused on.

5. Speaking with the Enemy: Indian Language and Translation in Seventeenth-Century Accounts of King Philip's War

Introduction

In this final chapter, I return full circle to the forms of language which were the basis for the discussion in my first chapter: translation and the representation of foreign languages in colonial Puritan texts. It has been my argument in previous chapters that King Philip's War represented a decisive shift in colonial-Native American relations, and in particular the way groups in the region viewed each other and interacted. By now looking at the ways in which issues of translation and Indian languages were treated by writers during this conflict I will demonstrate how colonial Puritan creation and portrayal of national, cultural and religious identity had developed since the early years of the colonies discussed in the first chapter. In discussing the depiction of individual rather than group identity, I will also focus on a different aspect of the King Philip's War texts to the previous chapter.

I will begin with two quotations, which demonstrate some of the ways in which depictions of Indian language were connected to the construction of individual identity during King Philip's War. The first is from the famous captivity narrative of Mary Rowlandson, which narrates her experiences after she was captured in an attack on her home, held captive in a Wampanoag community for three months, and eventually ransomed and released. In the whole of this account, she only once reports any of her Native American captors speaking to her using their own language, Wampanoag. In her account of the 'twelfth remove' of her captivity, she records that 'It was upon a Sabbath-day-morning, that they prepared for their Travel. This morning I asked my master whither he would sell me to my Husband. He answered me *Nux*, which did much rejoice my spirit.'²⁴¹

This is interesting for a number of reasons. Although it is the only Native American word used in the book, Rowlandson seems to expect her readers to understand it, since she doesn't translate it – although, in fact, her reaction makes its meaning clear. This assumption of the transparency of translation is echoed by the fact that this is the only time in her entire narrative that she reports a spoken Wampanoag word, which is astonishing, given that her captivity narrative describes months of her observations and interactions among a Wampanoag-speaking community. And she is not alone. Other captives from the New England colonies also downplay or ignore the other languages around

²⁴¹ Rowlandson, Mary White, 'The sovereignty & goodness of God, together, with the faithfulness of his promises displayed; being a narrative of the captivity and restauration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson' (Cambridge, 1682), reprinted in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars 1675-1699* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913) 107-168. All references to Rowlandson in this chapter are taken from this edition

them, so that except for occasional hints that they are using translators, or may be misinterpreting, it appears to the reader that they are having no linguistic difficulties at all. The questions of language-learning and translation are conspicuous in the captivity narratives of the period only by their absence.

While Rowlandson was a captive with the Wampanoag, a New England poet called Benjamin Thompson was recording his own impressions of the war in a narrative poem, to be published on both sides of the Atlantic. He imagined Philip giving a speech to his men, giving his reasons for the conflict, and included an attack on English application of their laws to the local Indians:

This no wunnegin, this so big machit law,
Which our old fathers' fathers never saw.²⁴²

This, and the rest of the speech, is a strange combination of Wampanoag words, English, and occasional fragments of ungrammatical, broken English. While Rowlandson and other captives tend to depict their captors as speaking either unproblematic English, or as producing bestial howlings without any human language whatsoever, the writings of those who spent the war fighting the Wampanoag and their allies are much more likely to present their enemies as speaking broken English.

In this chapter, I want to argue that these two very different ways of portraying Native American language are essentially two sides of the same coin. In a time of great fear and uncertainty, and under pressure from a culture with a very different language as well as culture and society, both captives and soldiers betrayed their fears and concerns through the ways that they depicted, or refused to depict, language and translation. I will examine these two extremes of the presentation of the language of the other: its foregrounding and its disguise. The first appears in the forms of depictions of 'broken English'; the second, its opposite, through writers' refusals to acknowledge the existence of any linguistic difficulties or need for translation at all. In doing so, I hope to show how different circumstances led to language being used in these opposite ways. And how, at the same time, both can reveal much to us about the construction and depiction of identity by Puritan writers in this period.

I am going to begin by giving some brief background to the conflict, the difficulties of the captives, and the production of texts about what the colonists called King Philip's War. I will then discuss what we generally know about the attitude to translation and language learning, and their connection to identity, in the colonies in the period. After this, I will go on to discuss the absence of Algonquian languages in the captivity narratives of the time and their strange presence in the accounts of the war

²⁴² Benjamin Thompson, 'News England's Crisis. Or a Brief Narrative, of New-Englands Lamentable Estate at Present, compar'd with the former (but few) years of Prosperity' (Boston, 1676), reprinted in Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom, eds., *So Dreadfull a Judgment: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War 1676-1677* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1978) 207-233, p.218

by colonial observers, and discuss how these manifestations of language can reveal more to us about the use of language in identity formation in the period.

Historical Background

In 1675, at the time of the outbreak of hostilities, the New England colonies had been established for roughly fifty years, and were growing and spreading inland, preaching Christianity, imposing the rule of English law, and in general putting huge pressure on the Native American inhabitants of the region, whose lands and ways of life were encroached on and disrupted. The colonists, on the contrary, were feeling that their place in the region was becoming more secure. They had won a decisive victory in their only previous important conflict with a Native American group, the Pequot War in the 1630s, their settlements were expanding and prospering, and they viewed themselves as a civilized, religious, well-ordered society in comparison to the 'heathen barbarism' of the Native American groups in the area.²⁴³

The tensions caused by this increasing English presence came to a head in 1675-6, when King Philip's War broke out. An alliance of Wampanoag, Narragansett and other Native American groups, led by the Wampanoag sachem King Philip, or Metacomet, carried out a series of devastating attacks on the scattered English settlements, killing and capturing settlers, many of whom (like Mary Rowlandson) were later ransomed. For several months, these raids were very successful, and at one point reached within ten miles of Boston, leaving the colonists with the real fear that they would be pushed back to the coast or even out of America altogether. However, with the help of Native American allies including some of the Christian Praying Indians, the English eventually rallied, and began to win encounters with their enemies. Eventually Philip and his principal advisors were killed, and large numbers of his followers, including his wife and son, sold into slavery. By August 1676 the fighting had gradually petered out.

King Philip's War was a bloody and destructive conflict, in which both sides fought violently and showed little mercy. It has been estimated that the colonists lost one in sixteen of their adult male population during the war, while their Native American enemies suffered even greater losses. The war also marked a shift in attitude by the majority of the colonists towards the Indians to one of permanent mistrust; many colonists now refused to distinguish between Native groups who had fought against them and the Praying Indians and other Native American allies who had been decisive in helping them win the war. And the colonists made use of tactics to win the war which were as violent and indiscriminate as any which they accused their 'savage' opponents of, as I have discussed in the previous chapter.

²⁴³ For a more detailed discussion of the causes and events of the war, see the Historical Introduction to chapter four.

All in all, this was a period in which the New England colonists were forced to reassess and redefine their place in the New World, and their relationship both to its original inhabitants, the Native Americans, and also to those watching them on the other side of the Atlantic. They were also forced to question the ways in which they saw themselves, both as a colonial group, and in terms of individual identity and place within colonial society. They responded to this by producing a huge number of texts, including histories, sermons, captivity narratives, poetry, letters, and news reports. These texts offer a valuable resource to us in examining the ways colonists chose to defend, portray and shape their identities in a time of enormous stress and questioning. And given that many of these texts were published in London rather than, or as well as, in New England, we can examine them for ways in which their writers framed them in order to try to influence perceptions of New England by outsiders across the Atlantic, as well as within their own society. It is some of these texts which I will use in this chapter, in order to trace the absence and presence of discussions of translation and language learning during the conflict.

One set of texts which I shall look at specifically closely is the captivity narrative. If King Philip's War was the first war in New England in which the English settlers experienced great loss of life, it was also the first in which both sides took captives on a large scale. This was done for a number of reasons, including adoption, slavery and ransom. Captives remained with their captors for periods of time ranging from a few hours to the rest of their lives; and some records of the ways they reacted to and experienced this sudden contact with a previously distant and little-known culture remain for us, in the form of the captivity narratives written by English men and women. The genre continued in varying forms until the nineteenth century, and also had examples among the French and Spanish, and once its obvious biases are taken into account – there are no narratives by Native American prisoners, or by Europeans who accepted and became part of Native culture – these narratives offer a fascinating portrayal of the reactions of colonists to living within a very different culture.

Fascinating, but also dangerous, because they were also written by ex-captives who were attempting to regain their places in colonial society. Many, particularly the narratives of women, were written or published under the influence of ministers; and the vast majority shape their narratives around the story of a captive's suffering and eventual return to their original community, rather than tracing their gradual adaptation and assimilation to their captors' community during their time there. Many of them betray fear of what rumour may have done to their reputation while they were absent, as will be discussed later in the chapter. The fascination which these texts provoked demonstrates the importance of these narratives to the colonial community and their ways of thought; and as a result the methods the narrators use to represent – or just as crucially, to conceal – events can be seen as revealing and significant.

War is a time in which boundaries between social, national, and sometimes religious groups are often made stronger and exaggerated. Whereas the language learning discussed in my first chapter is connected to the idea of trying to cross intercultural boundaries, and to make them less divisive, in this last chapter I will reflect the development of colonial portrayals of Indian language by looking at texts which do the opposite. I will examine some of the ways language was depicted by writers who were not trying to cross boundaries, but the opposite: either attempting to make them more clear, or insisting that the writer remained firmly on the colonial side of the divide. I am going to begin by looking at some of the ideas and beliefs which were extant in New England colonial society at the time the conflict broke out, before looking more specifically at the texts in which language is either absent or present in unusual forms.

Background and Introduction to Language Ideas

In this chapter, although I am looking at written texts, it is the representation of spoken language which is the object of my interest. Although the written word was, as I argued in chapter one, crucial to the Protestant identity of the colonists, speech and oral culture were much more significant to their day-to-day experience of life than was language in its written form. As a result, the manifestation of spoken language in the settlements obviously had huge significance.

Several critics have argued for the significance of oral culture in the New England colonies, the most prominent of whom is Kamensky, in *Governing the Tongue*. She argues that 'In seventeenth-century parlance, the word 'conversation' referred both to verbal exchange in particular and to human conduct in general. This definition surely made sense to New Englanders; for them, speech was conduct and conduct was speech. In their worldview, 'conversation' – in both of its contemporary meanings – amounted to nothing less than the whole 'way or course of a mans life.'²⁴⁴ Robert St George also emphasises how powerful and how dangerous contemporary belief made speech: 'we must realize that attitudes toward speaking are not historically constant. Seventeenth-century people in both Old and New England had a conception of speech very different from our own. To them, speech seemed inherently more mysterious, dangerous, and 'real' than it does today.'²⁴⁵

While not underestimating the crucial importance of the written word in the colonies, it is undeniable that the spoken word played – and plays – a huge role in everyday interactions and the way relationships with others are acted out. Kamensky and St. George make convincing arguments for the relative importance, and power, of the spoken word in the New England colonies; Kamensky, in

²⁴⁴ Jane Kamensky, *Governing the Tongue: The Politics of Speech in Early New England* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) p.5

²⁴⁵ Robert St. George, "Heated' Speech and Literacy in Seventeenth-Century New England", in *Seventeenth-Century New England: A Conference Held by the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, June 18th and 19th 1982* (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1984) 275-322, pp.278-9

particular, argues that 'We can recover a great deal about what speaking meant in seventeenth-century New England because the people who lived there cared so much about the social meanings of language' (p.12). If this is the case, then we can learn much from the ways seventeenth-century New Englanders used speech – and, more directly, from the ways in which they represented themselves. While Jane Kamensky has written a fascinating book by looking in depth at records of actual speeches, preserved in court records and documents, I intend to look at the written representation of speech here, rather than transcripts of oral statements. However, my analysis here will not concentrate on attempting to recover the original intentions behind the speakers' utterances, which have been made problematic by the interposition of interpreters and transcribers and the transition from oral to written words. Instead, it is the element of rewriting and readjusting itself which is my focus in this chapter. Rather than looking at the words of the Native Americans as a way of understanding their experience of the situation, I am looking in this chapter at the ways that Puritan rewritings of Indian voices can reveal more to us about the ways they used language to depict character and identity.

This is not, it is important to emphasise, to suggest that the Native Americans portrayed in these texts are only significant, or can only be interpreted, through the eyes of the Puritan colonists. The people these colonists describe were often depictions of real people (although some of the Indians featured in these texts are either entirely fictional or heavily fantasized), and had their own reasons for going to war, taking captives, and in general acting as they did. Glimpses of these real people can be seen, particularly in the captivity narratives, and many scholars, most recently Richter, Kupperman and Wyss, have written fascinating and useful accounts of the history and culture that attempt to stop viewing events through Puritan eyes.²⁴⁶ But in this thesis, I am attempting primarily to understand the ways Puritans constructed their world-views, and given this aim, the fact that Puritans depicted Native American figures in ways which sometimes depart radically from reality is highly significant. By looking at the very features of Puritan writing which make it deeply suspect as ethnohistorical source material, we can understand more fully the ways Puritan identity formation worked.

In discussing the ways in which spoken language can reveal the construction and presentation of social and even national identity, I am following a trend in scholarship that began in the 1980s. Kamensky has highlighted the way in which words and their speakers are interconnected in a particularly useful way, which I want to take as a starting-point to an analysis which looks at a different kind of source and has a different emphasis in interpretation to hers, because she is trying to reach

²⁴⁶ Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2001); Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2000); Hilary E. Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity and Native Community in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000)

the original words as much as possible, rather than looking specifically at the way they are portrayed, twisted, and rewritten, as I will do in this chapter.²⁴⁷ She argues that

scholars have started to think about the *social* laws governing discourse, exploring the extent to which knowing a language – or, more properly, belonging to a ‘speech community’ – means learning culture as well as grammar. We have begun, in short, to pay heightened attention to the interdependence of language and society. Instead of supposing a one-directional relationship between words and their speakers – a monologue in which people have power over words – we now think in terms of the dialogue through which cultures change the languages that create cultures. In such a schema, speech emerges both as a mirror of existing social relations and as a force that continually shapes and re-shapes a given society.

(Kamensky, p.10)

This idea of the relationship between speech and culture being a dialogue rather than a one-way relationship, language being both a mirror of society and a force to change it, has been particularly useful to my thesis; the ways in which people chose to present themselves in language affects the significance and meaning of the language available, which in turn influences the way it is used to present identity.

But unlike Kamensky’s excellent analysis of everyday speech, as captured in the transcripts of court and church records, my aim in this chapter is not to analyse the speech-patterns of normal intra-colonial relationships. Instead, I will discuss the words which could be described as being at the outer limits of representations of speech, both geographically and linguistically. Geographically, because I intend to analyse speeches which represent a communication or representation across cultures and between speakers of different native languages; in short, representations of the speech of Native Americans by English writers. And linguistically, because I also intend to look at depictions of their language that emphasise either linguistic fluentness, or the opposite, ‘broken’ speech.

In looking at situations where translation of the language of the other is required, I hope – as with the rest of this thesis – to analyse the ways in which Puritan depictions of language become revealing when they are put under pressure. In this case, this is not only due to the need to depict a foreign language but a foreign language identified with a culture which the colonists regarded as not only inferior to their own, but linked with heathenism and even satanic influence; furthermore, at the time the texts discussed in this chapter were written, most of the speakers of this language were at war with the colonies. Edward Gentzler argues that translation is ‘instrumental in the process of developing and maintaining power’, and it is also a good indicator of where the power in a relationship

²⁴⁷ See Kamensky, p.11, for discussion of the difficulties of recovering spoken words from written documents

lies; who speaks which language to whom can tell us much about their relationship and their attitudes to each other.²⁴⁸ As such, admitting to speaking the language of your enemies or translating for them might be seen to throw a certain interpretative light on your behaviour and relationships to the other, particularly given the relationships between language and national identity discussed in chapter one. And such issues should be difficult to avoid in texts such as the ones discussed in this chapter: Joshua Bellin notes that 'there is no issue that does not become involved in, or better that does not originate in, negotiations among languages.'²⁴⁹ Such issues have not, however, been much discussed in the criticism of seventeenth century New England, as I shall argue, partly due to writers downplaying such issues in sources written during the conflict, for reasons that will be discussed in this chapter; and partly because there seems to be an unconscious assumption among many scholars that English was always dominant in the region; something I shall argue is based more in hindsight than in a real understanding of the period.

It will be my argument in this chapter that in both the depictions of Indian language as entirely transparent, and as stumbling and incoherent, the writers of these texts intend to conceal the process of translation and intercultural communication. In doing so, I have found Murray's work *Forked Tongues* useful; it attempts something similar, aiming 'to demonstrate the complex and various ways in which the process of translation, cultural as well as linguistic is obscured or effaced in a wide variety of texts which claim to be representing or describing Indians, and what cultural or ideological assumptions underlie such effacement.'²⁵⁰ Both Murray and Bellin argue that acts of translation undermined colonial illusions of authority, stability, and uncomplicated communication, and as such are repressed and downplayed by colonial writers (Bellin, p.57; Murray, *Forked Tongues*, pp.7-8).

Translation was culturally significant for the English colonists, both in relation to the way they constructed their religious identities, and also their national ones. This is because of the particular situation and history of Protestantism in England, and more particularly in the New England colonies, in the seventeenth century. Not only were the colonies surrounded by other European and Native American groups, whose different and sometimes apparently threatening cultural differences was marked by their use of foreign languages; but the Protestantism which was such an important part of the colonists' culture and community identity also made strong links between religious identity and language, as discussed in previous chapters. For the colonists, reading the Bible in English was a hard-won right, one still denied to Catholics; and to lose English was to lose their religious as well as their national identity. The Bay Psalm Book, the first book printed in Massachusetts, emphasises the

²⁴⁸ Edward Gentzler, *Translation and Identity in the Americas: New Directions in Transatlantic Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008) p.2

²⁴⁹ Bellin, Joshua David, "A Little Shall I Say": Translation and Interculturalism in the John Eliot Tracts' in Colin G Galloway and Neal Salisbury, eds, *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience* (Boston: University of Virginia Press, 2003) Publications of The Colonial Society of Massachusetts Vol 71 (52-83) p.71

²⁵⁰ David Murray, *Forked Tongues: Speech, Writing and Representation in North American Indian Texts* (London, Pinter Publishers, 1991) p.1

importance of correct translation in order to approach closer to a pure understanding of the original words inspired by the Holy Spirit, even at the cost of elegance or fluidity in the phrasing.²⁵¹

An example from later in the century of the colonial connection between English Protestant identity and language can be seen in the captivity narrative of the minister John Williams, who was held prisoner by Native American groups and then by the French in Canada. He recounts in his narrative how he went to see one of his children, who was also a prisoner.

I discoursed with her near an hour; she could read very well and had not forgotten her catechism. And [she] was very desirous to be redeemed out of the hands of the Macquas [Mohawks] [...] I told her she must pray to God for His grace every day. She said she did as she was able and God helped her. But, says she, 'They force me to say some prayers in Latin, but I don't understand one word of them; I hope it won't do me any harm.' I told her she must be careful she did not forget her catechism and the Scriptures she had learned by heart [...] but all in vain; it's still there and has forgotten to speak English.²⁵²

Eunice eventually became fully integrated into the Mohawk community and chose not to return to her family; for John Williams, the moment at which she is lost, the sign by which he marks her loss of religious and group identity, is when she forgets how to speak English. And the process by which she forgets her native tongue begins in her being forced to say Latin prayers.

This link between Protestantism and speaking the vernacular is also, in effect, a link between national identity and the vernacular, because the colonists felt themselves to be surrounded by other national groups, who were largely not Protestant. Apart from the Dutch, who had until recently ruled in New Netherland, to the south, the other major European groups in the New World – the French, the Spanish, the Portuguese – were all Catholic, and had been (and to varying extents still were) regarded as threatening to England, partly due to their different religious allegiances. And the Native American groups in the region were regarded as even more alien, with their non-European identities, and non-Christian religions.

Finally, I want to argue in this chapter that this situation of translation, as well as being threatening and full of unresolved tensions, gave the colonial writers an opportunity to articulate themselves against the example of an Other. As Kamensky argues, the new situation they lived in was 'a world that now also included new and different peoples to define oneself *against*' (p.6).

²⁵¹ Anon., *The Whole Book of Psalms faithfully translated into English metre* (Cambridge MA, 1640); Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *To Live Ancient Lives: The Primitivist Dimension in Puritanism* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988) pp.139-50

²⁵² John Williams, 'The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion', in Alden T. Vaughan and Edward W. Clark, eds, *Puritans among the Indians* (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1981) 165-226, p.189

Transparent Language, Shattered Language

I have said that I want to look at the extremes of language not only spatially, in the sense of translating the language of an outside group, an Other; but also linguistically, in the sense that I will be looking firstly at situations in which Puritan portrayals of intercultural communication appear to be entirely unproblematic, and secondly at depictions of Native American language as broken, halting and ungrammatical.

In doing so, I wish to refer to the ideas raised by Stephen Greenblatt in his discussion of the early European explorers' portrayal of their communication with the Indians they encountered. Greenblatt, in particular in his essay 'Learning to Curse', raises the question of early representations of Indian speech, and the issues he discusses are surprisingly relevant to the seventeenth century colonies. He connects the image of Indian speech being incoherent to the idea of the Wild Man, who cannot speak, in European folklore, and the use of arguments about the connection between language and humanity that were used in the debate over Indian humanity by the early colonizers.²⁵³ He points out that 'again and again in the early accounts, Europeans and Indians, after looking on each other's faces for the first time, converse without the slightest difficulty', but argues that, unlike Las Casas' accusations of deliberate falsification by writers, 'There may have been such wilful falsification, but there also seems to have been a great deal of what we may call 'filling in the blanks' (pp.37-8). He points out that there is no middle ground in these accounts of encounter between representing the language as gibberish, and portraying it as identical to the writers' native tongue; 'once credited with intelligible speech, they employ our accents and are comfortable in our modes of thought', partly because 'it was immensely difficult in sixteenth-century narratives to represent a language barrier' (p.38). He argues that this was because

embedded in the narrative convention of the period was a powerful, unspoken belief in the isomorphic relationship between language and reality. The denial of Indian language or of the language barrier grew out of the same soil that, in the mid-seventeenth century, would bring forth the search for a universal language... behind this project... lay the conviction that reality was one and universal, constituted identically for all men at all times and in all places... there is a single faith, a single text, a single reality.

(p.39)

²⁵³ Stephen J. Greenblatt, "Learning to Curse" in *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture* (New York and London, Routledge, 1990) 22-51, p.29. References to Greenblatt in the next two paragraphs are to this chapter

Greenblatt argues that in the sixteenth century writers denied opacity to Native American speech and culture, making it transparent; either it was easy to see through and understand, or they denied that it was there at all (p.44). His argument focuses on the period of early encounter, but it has also been picked up on by scholars discussing Native American-colonial relationships in seventeenth century New England. Murray, in particular, uses Greenblatt as a starting point for his discussion of the two 'absolutely opposed mythical moments of encounter, which reappear implicitly in the presentation of Indians; the meeting with untouched and unknowable otherness, beyond the reach of language; and the rapport of unproblematic translatability, and of the transparency of language' (*Forked Tongues*, p.2). He goes on to discuss the ways translation is used in power, an argument I will discuss below. Murray agrees with Greenblatt in seeing colonial writers as lacking a literary form to represent non-perfect English, and adds that when they did develop such a form it portrayed Indians as inferior rather than adapting and developing their language (*Forked Tongues*, pp.7-8).

Bellin, in his discussion of Praying Indians, refers to both Greenblatt's and Murray's arguments that the fact, and the violence, of translation are camouflaged by colonial writers, and argues that translation is 'the silent term in a colonizing project based on its ability to comprehend all utterance and all meaning within its own symbolic system' (p.56) Randall C. Davis, in his article 'Early Anglo-American Attitudes to Native American Languages', also draws attention to the 'the relative lack of attention devoted to Native languages' in early English narratives of exploration.²⁵⁴ He points out that

A particularly curious phenomenon is that many of the English accounts often describe instances of intercultural communication – sometimes involving rather abstract concepts – without explaining the method of exchange. One is left with perplexing questions about just how Anglo-American writers derived certain information – often presented with unwavering confidence – regarding Native Americans

(p.231)

Although concentrating on early explorers writing in English, he traces this forward as far as Roger Williams, arguing that English writers generally portray themselves as being sufficiently eloquent that the Indians can understand them without the need for translation; only Williams, he suggests, acknowledges the difficulties and complexities of translation (Davis, p.235).

The question of why Indian language was portrayed as it was by early modern writers is one, therefore, which has intrigued scholars for some time, and one to which no decisively convincing answer has yet been advanced. However, while I have found Greenblatt's ideas a useful starting point

²⁵⁴ Randall C. Davis, 'Early Anglo-American Attitudes to Native American Languages' in Carmine Di Biase ed., *Travel and Translation in the Early Modern Period* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2006) 229-238, p.229

for thinking about portrayals of translation and the linguistic encounter with Native Americans, and while I agree with Murray and Bellin in their application of the idea of “transparent” Indian speech to the situation in the seventeenth-century New England colonies, I want to slightly alter the way in which the problem is examined.

Both Murray and Bellin follow Greenblatt in arguing that the two extremes of representation of Native American languages are complete incomprehensibility and complete transparency. I wish to argue, however, that while these two extremes are present in the texts written during King Philip’s war, there is another binary which can also be usefully discussed; that between invisible language and broken language, between representations of language which attempt to see straight through it, and those which thrust it into the foreground. I will argue that not only are these portrayals sometimes intended to demonstrate Indian inferiority; but that sometimes they are also an attempt by colonial writers to manipulate depictions of speech and language for their own benefit.

Invisible Translation: The Captivity Narrative

I want to look first at the representation of language and translation – or, more specifically, the lack of it – in captivity narratives from seventeenth-century New England. English captivity narratives as a genre developed during the seventeenth century, and the earliest were written about captivities during King Philip’s War.

Much has been written about the captivity narratives of the period, and their later development. One strand of criticism has focused on them as literary texts, often linking them to social and cultural issues; examples of such criticism has included van der Beets, Vaughan and Clark, and Logan. Another important element in critical discussion has been links between captivity narratives and gender, often with a discussion of the development of sentiment and the changing perception of women in early American society: Faery, Namias and Burnham are important examples of such criticism. Finally, there has been an interesting and useful ethnohistorical element, with critics such as Strong, Bross, Lepore and Wyss using the captivity of both Indians and English to discuss the role of intercultural mediators, the development of racism, and the experience of the Praying Indians, which until recently had been a less commonly studied perspective.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁵ Richard van der Beets, *Held Captive By Indians: Selected Narratives 1642 – 1836* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1973); Alden T. Vaughan and Edward W. Clark, ‘Cups of Common Calamity: Puritan Captivity Narratives as Literature and History’ in Vaughan and Clark, eds, *Puritans Among the Indians* (1-28); Lisa M. Logan, ‘Cross-Cultural Conversations: The Captivity Narrative’, in Susan Castillo and Ivy Schweitzer, eds, *A Companion to the Literatures of Colonial America* (Malden MA, Oxford and Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Blackwell, 2005); Rebecca Blevins Faery, *Cartographies of Desire: Captivity, Race and Sex in the Shaping of an American Nation* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999); June Namias, *White Captives: Gender and Ethnicity on the American Frontier* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina, 1993); Michelle Burnham, *Captivity and Sentiment: Cultural Exchange in American Literature, 1682 – 1861* (Hanover and London, University Press of New England, 1682-1861); Pauline Turner Strong, *Captive Selves, Captivating Others: The Politics and Poetics of Colonial American Captivity Narratives* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999); Kristina Bross, *Dry Bones and Indian*

One aspect of captivity narratives which has been very little discussed is the ways in which language learning and translation are represented in the captivity narratives written during King Philip's War. As I said in the introduction to this chapter, these themes are only really conspicuous by their absence in the texts written during the conflict; this is perhaps why so few critics or historians have approached the subject of the strange ease with which the English captives are able to communicate with their Native American captors. With some exceptions, notably Logan, Sewell, Burnham and Murray, the question of language tends to be altogether ignored; there seems to be an assumption that all the Native American captors speak fluent English, and that their captives therefore represent them as doing so in their narratives.²⁵⁶

These five critics do, however, take account of the problem of language to greater or lesser extents. Logan argues that Rowlandson's use of Wampanoag words is an example of her acceptance of the equality and difference of her captors, 'an example of the self ceding intellectual control by reporting the language of her captors without comment', but she dismisses the question of how much of the language Rowlandson understood, asserting that 'Rowlandson clearly understands a great deal of her captors' language', and assuming that her conversations with them are Wampanoag (Logan, pp.473-4). Burnham agrees, but approaches the subject in more detail, arguing that Rowlandson may have had prior knowledge of Indian culture and language through a Christian servant (although there is no evidence whether this servant lived in the Rowlandson household before or after King Philip's War), and tracing moments in the text which suggest that Rowlandson is speaking Wampanoag or translating for other English prisoners (Burnham pp.14-5, 21-4, 179 note 6). Sewell, Murray, and Van der Beets, on the other hand, take notice of the language difficulties which faced the prisoners, but do not credit Rowlandson and other captives with having learned Wampanoag. Sewell, although he notes that 'the captivity experience, for all its physical violence and emphasis on pure survival, is ultimately mediated through language', downplays the evidence of interaction between captives and captors, arguing that 'While a few former captives, mostly those who were adopted into tribes or otherwise assimilated, show pride at having mastered Indian languages, for the majority their captivity threatens a lapse into aphasia, as if they were Calibans in reverse, deprived of human language by their new masters' (Sewell, pp.42-3). Similarly, Vaughan and Clark argue that 'unfamiliarity with the Indian language kept them from understanding even nonthreatening remarks' (p.12) Murray, though he does not deal specifically with captivity narratives but rather with language and translation in general, does emphasise that in the case of cultural mediators and translators, '[i]t is important to remember, though, that the great *bulk* of language learning and translation was being carried out by Indians. This reflecting, of course, the wider situation, in which Indians were also the ones involved,

Sermons: Praying Indians in Colonial America (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004); Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage Books/ Random House, 1999)

²⁵⁶ David R Sewell, "So Unstable and Like Mad Men They Were": Language and Interpretation in Early American Captivity Narratives' in Frank Shuffleton ed, *A Mixed Race: Ethnicity in Early America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993)

willingly or otherwise, in *cultural translation*' (*Forked Tongues*, p.5). And he argues that translation is downplayed by the dominant culture, and only found significant in certain circumstances: 'only when whites choose, or are forced, to do it, and to ignore it otherwise' (*Forked Tongues*, pp.7-8). This suggests that he does not consider the English colonial captives to be disguising their language and communication, or has not recognised it as an important issue.

While I would argue that seeing Native American captors as constantly speaking English to their captives is a problematic assumption, given that they were the dominant power in this captor-captive relationship and that the captives were isolated in Wampanoag-speaking communities, I also believe that the evidence that Rowlandson and other captives could speak Native American languages is not clear-cut. Although I will discuss these theories about whether captives were able to communicate in the language of their captors later in this chapter, the question I am most interested in answering is a slightly different one, and one which none of these critics really reflects on. This is: why is the issue of how the captives communicated with their captors such a difficult one to answer? Why do we have so little evidence to judge the historical situation, and why are the writers and editors of captivity narratives so reluctant to discuss this subject? In this chapter, I intend to argue that the reason the issue appears so little in these texts is a crucial one, the absence of evidence an indication of the importance of the question, rather than indicating its insignificance. The fact that these writers depict language as a transparent medium and communication as being entirely uncomplicated by the differences of language between participants in a conversation is, I will argue, a fact worthy of discussion.

In order to demonstrate both how communication must have been taking place between captors and captives, and how this issue is discussed as little as possible in the texts, I want to look in some detail at the earliest, and most famous, of the New England captivity narratives, already quoted at the beginning of this chapter: *The sovereignty & goodness of God, together, with the faithfulness of his promises displayed; being a narrative of the captivity and restauration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*. This text is unusual, in that it seems to have been largely written by Rowlandson herself, unlike many of the narratives of the period which were told to ministers, who then recorded and published them (Strong, p.106). Rowlandson's text is framed by additional material which aims to put her story into a particular narrative context – an introduction, and the addition of a sermon by her minister husband after the main text – but the main part of the narrative appears to have been written by her (although we cannot discount the possibility of editing or advice from others).

Rowlandson's narrative is also useful, because she spent nearly three months with her Wampanoag captors; not long enough for her to have become entirely acculturated, but long enough for her to have learnt to live in Wampanoag society and interact with its inhabitants, as her text makes clear. Although when she is captured, she characterizes her Native American captors as wolves and hell-

hounds, savage animals without culture and language, 'roaring, singing, ranting, and insulting' (p.121); she also matches this description of their incoherent noise by their instructions to her, apparently in clear English, 'come go along with us' (p.120).

During her three-month captivity, she learns how to survive and prosper as a member of Wampanoag society, as Burnham in particular has argued (Burnham, pp.10-40). Although she does not put emphasis on this in her text, preferring to highlight her search for God's lessons in her situation and the treacherous and violent behaviour of her Indian captors, we can see her becoming a social and economic part of the community. During her three-month captivity she argues, works, trades her skills in knitting and sewing for food, cooks, and finds protectors if not friends among the Wampanoag. She also reports her discussions, transactions and arguments with her captors, implying a complex level of communication (Rowlandson, pp.135, 140, 144).

However, during this three month period of interaction, she never reports any difficulties in communicating with her captors. She never depicts them as speaking to her in broken or ungrammatical phrases, or using an interpreter; and although she mentions acting as a go-between for an English captive who is afraid he is about to be killed, she does not make it clear whether she merely knows who to ask for an explanation, or whether she is acting as an interpreter (p.142). In the whole text describing her life in this Wampanoag-speaking community, she only ever reports one Wampanoag word being spoken, as mentioned above: 'nux', as a response to whether she will be allowed to be ransomed and to go home.

This seems an inexplicable absence. Given that Rowlandson was suddenly put into an environment where everyone around her was speaking a foreign language, her lack of narrative reaction to this element of her situation is surprising. It seems unlikely that either Rowlandson or all of her captors were fluent enough in Wampanoag or English respectively to carry on conversations easily; and also strange that Rowlandson should have chosen not to record and even emphasise her inability to communicate with the captors who she wished to present as bestial and incomprehensible, and in a text which many critics have argued she used in order to emphasise her distance from their culture and reintegration into her own (Faery, p.51; Vaughan and Clark, 'Cups', pp.10-12). In particular, captivity narratives such as Rowlandson's are often argued to have been used as a ritual to symbolise a captive's return to their community, and their purification after contact with the 'savage heathenism' of Native American society. This is particularly noticeable in Rowlandson's narrative, in which she insists on her lack of corruption by her experiences; she converts her physical hardships into spiritual lessons and regeneration, but also insists that she was not raped or sexually molested, possibly in an

attempt to counter rumours which had been spread during her absence that she had been forced to marry 'the one-eyed sachem'.²⁵⁷

What is more, the conversations which Rowlandson allows the reader to assume are effortless become as complex as her social and economic interactions with her captors. From the simple command 'come go along with us' as she is taken prisoner, it becomes apparent over the course of the text that her conversations with her captors are much more extensive than simple commands and responses (Rowlandson, p.44). She relates one man's surprise that she can eat horse liver (pp.132-3), and is able to hold her own in arguments:

As I was sitting once in the Wigwam here, Phillips Maid came in with the Child in her arms, and asked me to give her a piece of my Apron, to make a flap for it, I told her I would not: then my Mistriss bad me give it, but still I said no: the maid told me if I would not give her a piece, she would tear off a piece of it: I told her I would tear her Coat then.

(p.142)

How did this conversation take place, and in what language, if any? Is this just a case of Rowlandson embroidering her anecdote to make her narrative more entertaining, and in reality there was no spoken conversation at all as the three women squabbled over the apron? While possible, it seems unlikely that this could apply to all the situations which Rowlandson reports in this manner, and so no more reason here than anywhere to think that she is inventing conversations, rather than merely avoiding mentioning how the communication took place. Could Rowlandson's 'Mistriss' and 'Phillips Maid' have been speaking English to their captive? While no detailed surveys of language learning have been carried out which would allow us to judge who learnt which languages, and so how likely it was that an important Wampanoag woman or a maid might have learned English, it seems unlikely – if not impossible – that both of them would be fluent. And in any case, given that the conversation took place in a situation where Wampanoag was the dominant, majority language, and at a time when the Wampanoag speakers were in a position of dominance over their captive and demanding that she comply with their demands, it seems strange that they would defer to her by speaking to her in her own language, rather than forcing her to try to understand theirs.

In which case, is it possible that this conversation was carried out in Wampanoag? Despite some critical support for such an idea, from scholars such as Logan and Burnham, the idea seems initially unlikely. It seems probable, however, that this implausibility is more a feature of hindsight, and our own cultural expectations, than the actual situation faced by Rowlandson. We live in a time in which English is a global language with a dominance beyond the number of people who speak it as a first

²⁵⁷ N.S., 'A New And Further Narrative of the State of New-England; being a Continued Account of the Bloody Indian War' (London, 1676) reprinted in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars 1675-1699* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913) 75-100, p.83

language, and we know that English did eventually become dominant in the New England region; as a result it is easy to assume that it would be Native Americans who would learn to speak English rather than the English colonists who had to communicate in Wampanoag. But it is not impossible that Rowlandson learnt at least some of the language of her captors. Even three months of captivity could well have been enough to have taught her to speak a few words – and they clearly did, since she understood ‘nux’ when it was given to her as an answer. And, as mentioned above, Burnham suggests that it was possible that Rowlandson had some prior experience or knowledge of the Wampanoag language or a related dialect; at one point her household had an Indian servant, although it is not known whether this was before or after King Philip’s War (Burnham, p.179 note 6). Similarly, as a minister’s wife, living within close proximity of two Praying Indian towns, she might have been in contact with visiting Indians or Praying Indians, and found it useful to learn at least a few words of an Algonquian language in consequence (Burnham, p.179 note 7).

Because of the lack of discussion of such topics in her narrative, it is impossible to be certain of which language, or whether it was a mix of languages or some form of trade pidgin which was spoken by Rowlandson, her mistress, and Philip’s maid, and reported by Rowlandson as perfect English; and without further detailed research on the subject, it is difficult to do more than guess. What we do know is limited to a few facts: we know that some Indians could speak English, as witness the exchange between Nishohkou and the church elders which is quoted in the section on ‘broken English’ below. We also know that Rowlandson understood at least one word of Wampanoag, and even seems to have expected her readers to understand it as well. Furthermore, English was not the globally dominant language that it is today, with French, Spanish and Italian being the languages of diplomacy and Latin the universal language; the multiple languages spoken by men such as Roger Williams and John Eliot suggest that the English did not have a mindset of refusing to learn other languages. From these general observations, I think it more than likely that Rowlandson could speak, or learnt to speak, at least a few words of Wampanoag by the end of her captivity. But in the end, this is no more than an educated guess; and this is the case because however the communication and interaction Rowlandson reports was carried out, the most striking fact of all is her refusal to discuss the process at all.

If this was only a feature of her narrative, we might assume that it was only an accidental feature; for some reason, it never occurred to her to explain to her readers how she communicated with her captors, or perhaps King Philip’s War was still such a recent event when her narrative was first published in 1682 that she assumed that everyone would know how communication took place, and therefore she had no need to explain to her readers. However, this reluctance to discuss language and translation is a feature not only of Rowlandson’s text, but of the vast majority of captivity narratives published in the period, and in fact stretches into the beginning of the next century as a feature of such texts. To demonstrate how they seem to suggest similar concerns and tensions with

language and translation to Rowlandson, I will look at the way these issues are dealt with in the narratives of Quentin Stockwell, who was also taken captive in King Philip's War, and John Williams, who was made captive by the Indians and French at the turn of the century. As with Rowlandson, these narratives report conversations and interactions in apparently easy and fluent English, but at the same time occasionally include details which cast serious doubt on whether this was really the case.

Quentin Stockwell, who was a captive for five months in 1677, never mentions problems communicating with his Native American captors, reporting conversations as if they are entirely comprehensible, although he admits to confusion about actions and motives; at one point he is afraid and says that later he discovered he was meant to be burnt; he nearly tries to kill everyone in the night, but changes his mind, and is saved by his master the next day.²⁵⁸ It seems likely that this was some form of adoption ritual, and his admission that he didn't recognise what was going on until later indicates that he did not have as easy a comprehension of the language and actions around him as his narration would suggest. Later in his narrative, he recounts being ransomed to the French, and describes his first two weeks with them, which include having 'received much civility from a young man, a bachelor' and being rescued from a fight with an Indian by a Frenchman (pp.87-8). It is only after he gives all these details of interactions that the reader discovers that he cannot speak French at all; when he goes to plead for the life of the man who struck him, he mentions casually that 'I spake to the captain by an interpreter' (p.88), revealing that all of his apparently uncomplicated conversations with the French, at least, to have required either the French person to have spoken English, or for both participants to have communicated through either a mediator, or by signs and guesswork. But as with Rowlandson, we cannot know for sure either way, because apart from this casual mention of a translator, Stockwell does not mention details of language, translation or communication at all.

John Williams, author of another well-known captivity narrative, *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion*, displays the same reluctance to discuss the problems of language in his text. It should be noted that his captivity happened much later than those of Rowlandson and Stockwell, at the end of the seventeenth century, but his experiences and treatment of language are so similar, and his situation as a captive bears such a resemblance to the earlier texts, that I think it is comparable; and it is interesting in itself that this theme was continued up to the end of the century, suggesting its continued importance to a colonial society under pressure due to attacks from Native American and French colonial groups. Williams recounts incidents such as the following without revealing whether he understands the language, or is guessing as to the content of conversations:

²⁵⁸ Increase Mather, 'Quentin Stockwell's Relation of his Captivity and Redemption', reprinted in Vaughan and Clark, eds, *Puritans among the Indians* (Cambridge MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1981) 77-90, p.82. All future references to Stockwell's narrative are taken from this edition. Although Mather printed the story in *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* (Boston, 1684) he claims that he only 'insert[ed it] in the Words by himself [Stockwell] expressed' (p.80), and so was probably at most an editor of the tale rather than its writer

When we came to our lodging-place, an Indian captain from the Eastward spake to my master about killing of me and taking off my scalp. I lifted up my heart to God to implore His grace and mercy in such a time of need. And afterwards I told my master that if he intended to kill me I desired he would let me know of it, assuring him that my death after a promise of quarter would bring down the guilt of blood upon him. He told me he would not kill me.

(pp.176-7)

We have no idea which language, if any, this takes place in; but Williams displays no uncertainty at all that his interpretation is correct, and feels no need to explain to his readers how he knows this and how the communication happened. Later, he recounts his conversations with the Jesuits who attempt to convert him and his congregation with an equal lack of concern about the means of information transfer, and as with Stockwell and his mention of using a translator, it is only because of a casual sentence that the reader learns how at least some of their conversations took place: 'the governor's lady (seeing me sad) spoke to an officer at the table who could speak Latin to tell me that after dinner I should go along with them and see my two children' (p.191).

This implicit denial of linguistic difficulties is a strange one. Being surrounded by people speaking a language you don't understand can be an intimidating experience even on holiday; surely this would be even more the case for an isolated captive trying to survive and interact with captors speaking an unfamiliar language. But not one of these narratives makes any mention of such difficulties; instead, all of them present the situation as Mary Rowlandson does, implying that everyone is speaking fluent English and meaning is transparent, despite the fact that they had been, as Sewell puts it, 'carried off to territory that was as unfamiliar linguistically as geographically' (p.39).

Language, Religion and Culture

I want to suggest that one reason for this strange absence of the need for translation from the captivity narratives produced in the New England colonies in the period was the connection in this culture between language, religion, and national identity. This connection can be seen very clearly in the captivity narrative of John Williams, discussed above. Although this was written during a later colonial conflict than that of Rowlandson in King Philip's War, it demonstrates the connection so clearly that I wish to begin with this narrative, and then show how similar elements can also be seen in Rowlandson's story.

John Williams, who was a minister in his community both before and after being taken captive, wrote his narrative more interested in spiritual dangers than in physical; Vaughan and Clark have noted that

his descriptions of the landscape and danger are much less detailed than other narratives, but he spends pages on arguments with Jesuits and transcriptions of letters to his son, who was in danger of being converted to Catholicism (Vaughan and Clark, 'Common Calamity', p.22). His comments are interesting for the ways in which they link the wrongness or rightness of religion to language. At one point he asks his son directly, 'can you think their religion is right when they are afraid to let you have an English Bible?' (John Williams, p.218). At another, he is forced to observe a Mass, and observes:

I went in and sat down behind the door, and there saw a great confusion instead of gospel order. For one of the Jesuits was at the altar saying Mass in a tongue unknown to the savages, and the other between the altar and the door saying and singing prayers among the Indians at the same time saying over their Pater Nosters and Ave Mary by tale from their chaplets, or beads on a string.

(p.185)

His disgust at the Catholic form of worship, which is expressed throughout the text, is linked here to the lack of understanding; the Mass in an unknown language, the confusion of voices so nothing can be heard, and the Indians speaking to themselves rather than listening anyway. This link between the mother tongue and Protestantism, as discussed above, was frequently made, but I want to suggest that there was a further link than this, between personal identity and culture and language.

For captives in seventeenth-century New England, an act of translation, of learning the language of your captors, was essentially an act of assimilation with their culture. In the context of Puritan society, the acquisition of elements of another culture amounted to a rejection of your own. That there was a deep connection in New England colonial society in the seventeenth century between Englishness and Protestantism has been convincingly argued recently by several critics, most prominently Thomas Scanlan, who discusses the ways in which writers such as Williams and Eliot threatened this link in order to serve their own political or evangelical ends.²⁵⁹ And this link can also be seen in Williams' account of his last meeting with his young daughter Eunice, quoted more briefly earlier in this chapter. Eunice became notorious for becoming assimilated, marrying into a leading Mohawk family, and never being reclaimed to English Protestant culture; this was Williams's last chance to influence her before he was ransomed:

I discoursed with her near an hour; she could read very well and had not forgotten her catechism. And [she] was very desirous to be redeemed out of the hands of the Macquas [Mohawks] and bemoaned her state among them, telling me how they profaned God's

²⁵⁹ Scanlan, Thomas, *Colonial Writing and the New World 1583 – 1671: Allegories of Desire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) pp.123-186

Sabbaths and said she thought that a few days before they had been mocking the devil, and that one of the Jesuits stood and looked on them.

I told her she must pray to God for His grace every day. She said she did as she was able and God helped her. But, says she, 'They force me to say some prayers in Latin, but I don't understand one word of them; I hope it won't do me any harm.' I told her she must be careful she did not forget her catechism and the Scriptures she had learned by heart... [he explains how attempts to ransom her were attempted by the French] ... but all in vain; it's still there and has forgotten to speak English.

(p.89)

The fears and tensions of Williams' account are revealing. The fear of both the apparent lack of religion of the Mohawks and the corrupted religion of the Jesuits is clear, and it is very noticeable that Williams' concerns about Eunice's future religious prospects are expressed in terms of language. He implicitly links her ability to read and say her catechism with her desire to return to her own culture, moving from the account of her literacy in one sentence immediately to her wish to escape the heathen in the next. In the second section, her desire for God's aid in prayer is balanced against the incomprehensible Latin prayers she is forced to say, and which Williams has spent much of his account detailing his own resistance to speaking. But all his attempts to encourage her to maintain her religious identity, the prayers and catechism and memorized scriptures, are made futile by the admission that she has forgotten how to speak English. Carefully memorized quotations and responses will no longer mean anything to her if the language they were learnt in has also disappeared.

Given the connections that were believed to exist in the seventeenth century between the language an individual spoke and their character and national identity, as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, it is hardly surprising that captives would have perceived the process of learning to communicate with their captors in their own languages as at least appearing to be a betrayal of their own culture and nationality, an acceptance of the situation of captivity and a sign of assimilation into another culture. Identity is portrayed in these texts of captivity as being absolute and singular, with no possibility of a bicultural identity or multiple allegiances being suggested as a possibility until much later in the history of the colonies. Eunice Williams being taught to say Latin prayers was not just the start of her learning more about another culture, but as a direct consequence, the beginning of her loss of the English language, her English identity, and her Protestant beliefs. Even if captives had already learnt the language they used to communicate before their captivity, or even if the means of communication was via sign language, or even in English – in all of these cases, concentrating in too much detail on the means of conducting communication and interaction was to suggest the effort that the captive had put towards at least a partial assimilation with the society that was holding them captive.

The critic David Sewell points out that the experience of language-learning must also have been humiliating for captives who were used to being part of the dominant culture; as argued above, the details of who speaks which language to whom is a good measure of where the power lies in the relationship (Sewell, pp.39-40). Sewell argues that captivity narratives were a way to reverse the power relations after the captivity was ended; to allow writers to revenge themselves on their captors by capturing and taming them through the written narrative, 'to counter a physical humiliation with a linguistic victory' (Sewell, p.42).

No wonder, then, that the writers of captivity narratives uniformly choose to move the focus of the narrative away from language and translation, to make such communication seem effortless and therefore unproblematic; and to fix the gaze of the reader instead on the physical details of their assimilation to their captive environment. Burnham has noted, for example, the way Mary Rowlandson tracks her increasing ability to eat what she regarded as disgusting food (Burnham, pp.21-4): 'the third week, though I could think how formerly my stomach would turn against this and that, and I could starve and dy before I could eat such things, yet they were sweet and savoury to my taste' (Rowlandson, p.131). While Puritan thought expected the body to be weak and corrupt, the soul and mind – and their means of expression, language – would be viewed with deep suspicion if they showed signs of cultural assimilation.

It is for this reason, perhaps, that the only word Mary White Rowlandson admits to have been spoken in Wampanoag in the whole of her narrative – *Nux* – was included in the text at the moment when she learned that she was to be ransomed and to go home; the effect is of her dropping her guard in her delight, but it is also the moment in the text at which she reaffirms her commitment to the English colonial community, with her claim that the positive answer 'did much rejoice my spirit.' It is only at this moment that she feels secure enough in her narrative to admit to any linguistic intercultural communication at all; and this fact in itself suggests the significance and power of language as an element of identity in the period.

I now want to go on to look at another set of texts which depict the connection between language and identity during this period of intercultural conflict. Although these texts appear initially to be entirely the opposite of the captivity narratives, in that they highlight language and the process of intercultural translation, rather than disguising it, I want to argue that in a different way this also illustrates the tensions which existed around the connection between language, religion, and national identity during King Philip's War.

Broken English

For the rest of this chapter, I want to turn from the refusal to discuss the details of intercultural communication language and translation in the captivity narratives, and focus on what would seem to be an entirely opposite phenomenon: the practice of depicting Native Americans as speaking broken English or a confused mixture of English and Native American languages. Although such representations go back to the early days of the colonies, I will argue that they appear prominently in the work of several King Philip's War writers, and are used here in a new and more anti-Indian way. Different writers use this theme of broken language in varying ways, depending on their writing style and aims in the text; but I want to argue that unlike some earlier depictions which saw Native American use of broken English as a sign of their adaptation to colonial – and hence Protestant – ideas, these writers all use their depictions to undermine Indian identity and culture.

The depiction of Indians speaking broken English was, to some extent, a feature of life in New England. The historian James Axtell, in particular, discusses it in the context of its historical impact on Native American–colonial relationships in the period, and argues that the 'broken English' spoken by Samoset and Squanto, full of Algonquian terms and phrases, 'was to remain the standard language of intercourse between natives and newcomers in southern New England for most of the colonial period', with only missionaries learning Native American languages in depth.²⁶⁰ Axtell argues that Native groups used such pidgins as a neutral language, owned by nobody, and which helped protect and disguise their own languages from outsiders (Axtell, *Natives*, pp.46-75).

Portrayals of Indians speaking broken English were also particularly associated, in colonial texts written before King Philip's War, with the Praying Indians. Such depictions can be clearly illustrated through an example from one of the Eliot Tracts, *A Further Account of the Progress of the Gospel*, published in 1660, which recounts the attempt by a group of Christian Native Americans to become accepted as church members and begin their own church, as discussed in chapter three. The majority of the Praying Indian narratives and answers were made in Massachusetts, with translators relaying information for the English church ministers and elders present; but occasionally an answer is made in English, and the text, which presents itself as a faithful transcription, notes this:

Elder Heath propounded this Question, which hee [Nishohkou] answered in broken English.

Question. Whether doth Satan still tempt you with former lusts and temptations? and what do you when you are tempted?

²⁶⁰ James Axtell, *Natives and Newcomers: The Cultural Origins of North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) p.60

Answer to the first part. Yes, alwaies to this day. *To the second part:* When Devil comes, I sometime too much believe him, but sometime I remember to do Gods word, because Gods Word is all one a sword, and breaks the Devils temptations.

Deacon *Park* propounded this Question. *What is it in sin, why hee hateth it now more than before?*

Answ. his answer in broken English. I did love sin, but now not all one so, because I hear Gods Word, and that shewes mee, that which I loveth is evil, and will bring mee to hell, therefore I love it not now.

Deacon *Park* urged, *Doth hee hate sin because it is against God?*

Answ. That chiefly.²⁶¹

Not only does the text transcribe the English text with its idiosyncratic use of grammar and phrasing, but it twice highlights the answer as being 'broken English'. The use of the word 'broken' in this phrase suggests that the editor or transcriber of the text understands the speaker as having attempted to speak standard English and failed to reproduce its grammar correctly, rather than using a pidgin, as Axtell suggests.

It could also be seen as the transcriber being concerned to validate his transcription, emphasising that he is echoing the exact words rather than, for example, writing abbreviated notes. This is important, because the emphasis in the Eliot Tracts, as I have argued in chapter two, is on the idea of witnessing, and providing the reader with an experience as if they were there; the idea of the reliable transcription is an important one. Bross and Round, however, have argued that depictions of Praying Indians speaking broken English in the Tracts were intended by the writers to demonstrate their sincerity and humility; the use of an imperfect language to express their thoughts acted as a guarantee that such thoughts were real and spontaneous, rather than memorised or smoothly deceptive. Bross, in particular, argues that as a result such broken English was identified particularly with the identity of the Christian Indian in the years before King Philip's War (Round, p.247; Bross, pp.169-70).

Having established the background to the ways in which portrayals of Indians speaking broken English had been used in the period before King Philip's War, I now want to turn to looking in close detail at the ways in which texts written during King Philip's War itself, focusing on the conflict, portray Indian speech as broken English. Such texts were obviously written in very different times to the missionary texts quoted a moment ago; during the 1675-6 conflict, Praying Indians rapidly became objects of English mistrust, as the colonists reclassified all Indians as enemies, rather than distinguishing between 'heathens' and 'Christians'. Such was the level of prejudice that the Praying Indians who chose not to join Philip and his allies were interned on Deer Island for a large part of the

²⁶¹ John Eliot, *A Further Account of the Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England* (London, 1660) pp.8-9

conflict, partly in order to protect them from violence at the hands of colonists who refused to distinguish between Indian allies and Indian enemies. Given this context, these texts, which were written by colonists and published in London and Boston, can be expected to display different priorities and viewpoints on Native American speech than whether it showed signs of redemption.

The first example I want to look at is an extract from a newsletter, published in London, and written by N.S., who is thought to be the merchant Nathaniel Saltonstall. In this section, he recounts an incident when an English captain takes off his wig just as battle is joined:

As soon as the Indians saw that, they fell a Howling and Yelling most hideously, and said, *Umh, Umh me no strawmerre fight Engismon, Engismon got two Hed, Engismon got two Hed; if me cut off un Hed, he got noderm a put on beder an dis*; with such like Words in broken English, and away they all fled.²⁶²

It is immediately obvious that this is not written in the same style as the Eliot Tract extract quoted above, nor is it intended to achieve the same effect. The incident itself is ridiculous, designed to portray the enemy Indians as credulous, amazed by superior colonial culture (in the form of a wig!), and cowardly, rather than being in any way realistic. Nobody familiar with the history of the colonies could imagine that Indians who had lived in contact with the English colonies over the past fifty years would never have seen a wig before, or believe that they would think it was a head being taken off if it was removed.

This exaggerated portrayal of the Indians as uncultured savages is also extended, in this extract, to their language.²⁶³ Apart from the implausibility of a terrified and fleeing Indian warrior choosing to start 'Howling and Yelling' in broken English, rather than his own native language, the broken English itself is crudely represented. Comparing it to the transcribed speech above, it can be seen to be much more stylised and exaggerated than the Praying Indian phrasing. Nishohkou, although being described as speaking 'broken English' by the transcriber, is effectively using a pidgin dialect, with English words but Massachusetts grammar and phrasing. His statements are often eloquent and vivid in their very differences from the standard English of the period: 'Gods Word is all one a sword, and breaks the Devils temptations', for example. Saltonstall's representation of Indian speech, on the other hand, is much less sophisticated. He includes exclamations which sound non-English – '*Umh, Umh*' – and transcribes the speaker's accent as well as words, in order to emphasise the difference to a standard colonial pronunciation of that period: '*Engismon got two Hed, Engismon got two Hed*'. This, in conjunction with heavy emphasis on differences in grammar and word order, and occasionally

²⁶² N[athaniel]. S[altonstall]., 'The Present State of New-England with Respect to the Indian War' (London, 1675) reprinted in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars 1675-1699* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913) 24-50, p.39

²⁶³ In this argument I am in agreement with Bross, p.171, who also sees Saltonstall as trying to create a sense of linguistic inadequacy rather than a transcription of the language.

incomprehensible words such as '*strawmerre*', makes the broken English seem both much more alien than the transcribed words in the Eliot Tracts, and also inferior to native speakers of English. In combination with the cowardice and ignorance implied by the actions in Saltonstall's text, the extract can be seen not as an attempt at a realistic portrayal of the enemy's weakness, but rather the piece is a fairly crude attempt to brand the Indians as stupid and superstitious, with a broken and uneducated style of speech to match.

This theme is echoed throughout Saltonstall's report, and he depicts allied Indians as speaking in the same way as the enemy warriors in the extract quoted above. In one passage, he describes the lynching of some captured Indians at the insistence of the mob, and accuses one of the Indian allies of the English, who is present, of sucking the dead man's blood, and saying '*Umh, Umh nu, Me stronger as I was before, me be so strong as me and he too, he be ver strong Man fore he die*' (p.41). Similarly, in an account of a 'Friend Indian' saving a wounded man, the language is very similar:

he took him up and said, *Umh, umh poo Ingismon, mee save yow Life, mee take yow to Captain Mosee*; he carries him fifteen Miles the Day after to Captain Moseley, and now this Man is well again and in good Health.

(p.43)

Whether the Native Americans depicted by Saltonstall are friends or enemies, carrying out acts Saltonstall approved of or not, they are all portrayed in exactly the same way, even down to each statement beginning with the exclamation '*Umh, umh*'. These other quotations also make clear that Saltonstall ascribes a high level of grammatical difference to every Native American he depicts; they all refer to themselves as 'me' rather than 'I'. Furthermore, the Praying Indian transcript quoted above does *not* depict speakers saying "me" rather than "I"; this suggests that this grammatical variation was not a feature of the local pidgin dialect which Saltonstall had picked up on, but rather his own invention. The effect is to infantilise and belittle the speaker, and seems to be based more on childish errors in grammar than genuine observance of Native American speakers. Like the first extract quoted, the effect is one of a crude attack on Native American intelligence and articulacy, as well as an unwillingness to distinguish between different Indian voices and characters – even when the story told is clearly about one Indian in particular, he is never distinguished by name, description, or language from every other Indian in Saltonstall's portrayals.

Much more subtle is Benjamin Thompson's depiction of King Philip, or Metacomet, in his poetic description of the conflict, *New Englands Crisis*. He pictures the sachem declaring his reasons for war, in terms which are sufficiently interesting to justify a long quotation:

And here methinks I see this greasy lout

With all his pagan slaves coiled round about,
 Assuming all the majesty his throne
 Of rotten stump, or of the rugged stone
 Could yield; casting some bacon-rind-like looks,
 Enough to fright the student from his books,
 Thus treat his peers, and next to them his commons,
 Kenneled together all without a summons.
 'My friends, our fathers were not half so wise
 As we ourselves who see with younger eyes.
 They sell our land to Englishmen who teach
 Our nation all so fast to pray and preach:
 Of all our country they enjoy the best,
 And quickly they intend to have the rest.
 This no wunnegin, this so big machit law,
 Which our old fathers' fathers never saw.
 These English make and we must keep them too,
 Which is too hard for them or us to do,
 We drink we so big whipped, but English they
 Go sneep, no more, or else a little pay.
 Me meddle squaw me hanged, our fathers kept
 What squaws they would, whether they waked or slept.
 Now if you fight I'll get you English coats,
 And wine to drink out of their captains' throats.
 The richest merchants' houses shall be ours,
 We'll lie no more on mats or dwell in bowers.
 We'll have their silken wives take they our squaws,
 They shall be whipped by virtue of our laws.
 If ere we strike 'tis now before they swell
 To greater swarms than we know how to quell.
 This my resolve, let neighbouring sachems know,
 And everyone that hath club, gun, or bow.'
 This was assented to, and for a close
 He stroked his smutty beard and cursed his foes.

(Tompson, p.218)

Here, again, the depiction of Philip's speech is used to undermine him, although more subtly. Unlike Saltonstall's portrayal of Indian language, much of Philip's speech is reported in a neutral English (sneep was a contemporary word meaning reprove or chide, rather than a nonsense word) which

could be taken as representing a translation, for the benefit of the assumed English-speaking audience, of Philip's speech in his native Wampanoag.

However, occasional lines of speech break away from this neutral English. 'This no wunnegin, this so big machit law', Tompson has Philip declare, not only making use of the relatively commonly represented pidgin phrase 'this so big', but also mixing Wampanoag words into Philip's English speech – the line translates as 'this is not good, this is a very evil law'. Not only does this use of Native American vocabulary obscure the meaning of the line and make it sound confused and nonsensical, it implies that Philip is actually speaking in English rather than his own language, and doing so badly. This effect is increased by the representation of his speech as not only occasionally falling back into using Wampanoag vocabulary, but also using pidgin phrases such as 'this so big', and later, 'We drink we so big whipped' – a form which is typical of representations of pidgin English, using English vocabulary but Native American grammar and word forms. This implies that the speech is actually being delivered in English rather than translated by the poet, and in incorrect and broken English at that. There is an almost unconscious assumption displayed here that it is natural to speak English, but that these Indians cannot do it effectively.

This use of Wampanoag words and Pidgin grammar contrasts strongly with the use of highly literate, almost literary, language in the rest of the speech: 'If ere we strike 'tis now before they swell/ To greater swarms than we know how to quell./ This my resolve, let neighbouring sachems know...' This is elevated language, lending a theatrical air to the scene – which, of course, made it immediately suspect in the context of Puritan mistrust of the theatre.²⁶⁴

I wish to suggest that this passage was intended to be read as a satirical attack on Philip, portraying him as setting himself up as a noble king on a throne, declaiming to his followers in elevated language, and then undercutting him by revealing the throne to be a 'rotten stump, or... rugged stone', in the manner of the audience to a play having the poverty of the props pointed out to them. Similarly, his elevated, dramatic style in much of the speech is occasionally combined with Algonquian words and broken English in order to suddenly bring down the linguistic level of the speech, and subject it to ridicule.

In this I differ significantly from Bross, who is one of the few other critics to have discussed the poem (Bross, p.173). Bross sees this depiction of Philip as being a mockery of the Praying Indian missions, including their gifts of English clothes to converts; she argues that 'Tompson's representation is fully intelligible only with reference to the figure of the Praying Indian', particularly since Philip had been used as a character in Eliot's *Indian Dialogues*, and sees the arguments he makes as having been

²⁶⁴ See, for example, Cecelia Tichi's argument about the Puritan connection of acting with hypocrisy, 'Thespis and the 'Carnall hipocrite': A Puritan Motive for Aversion to Drama' in *Early American Literature* 4.2 (1969) 86-103

put into his mouth to discredit them (Bross, p.173). As I will argue below, in the section on literary models, I believe that Bross puts too much emphasis on the Praying Indians as a model; and though I agree with her that the arguments spoken by the character 'Philip' are intended to discredit real Indian grievances, I see this as intended to be achieved through ridicule rather than an elaborate critique of Praying Indian identity in the Eliot Tracts.

Not only does this have the effect of undermining Philip's other grievances, which a modern audience at least can recognise as being based in real problems in the period; but in the context of the previous section of *Tompson's* poem, which promised the English success if they returned to virtuous plain living and rejected materialism, this portrayal suggests that the Indian desire to change places with the English will, ironically, lead to their downfall. As the Indians become more materialistic and desire English houses, women and power, the English who abandon these to fight will regain their virtue and triumph, regaining the ability to 'kill thousands angel-like', and presumably empty New England of Native American groups once and for all.

This is particularly significant, given my argument in chapter four that colonial texts in this period repeatedly express a fear of being driven out of the colonies and replaced. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Thomas Scanlan has argued that writers such as Williams and Eliot played on this fear for their own benefit; Williams suggesting that the Narragansett Indians, and Eliot that the Christian Praying Indians, might one day replace the English as God's chosen nation. Whether or not *Tompson* was aware of such mission rhetoric, his portrayal of Philip acts as an antidote to colonial fears of being replaced in the region by their Native American opponents in the conflict. *Tompson* portrays Philip and his men as wanting to usurp the place of the colonists, even to the extent of attempting to make his speech in English; but far from being a threatening figure, the Philip of the poem fails in his imitation. Far from being a genuine threat, Philip is portrayed as greedy and petulant, attempting to ape the settlers in making his speech in English but failing to do so convincingly, and becoming a figure of ridicule as a result.

Although *Tompson's* poem is considerably more subtle than *Saltonstall's* crude depiction, I suggest that it is an equally damaging portrait of the Native American characters depicted. By portraying Philip as desperately attempting to gain cultural validity and respect by aping the English language and culture, *Tompson* attacks Wampanoag culture and identity as much as does *Saltonstall* with his caricatures of simple and superstitious savages. *Tompson's* attempt can be linked to Homi Bhabha's discussion of colonial mimicry, in which colonial authority is threatened by a shift in the colonial subject from mimicry – a difference that is almost the same but not quite – to menace – which is

almost completely different but not quite.²⁶⁵ In *New Englands Crisis*, Tompson attempts to produce the reverse effect; defusing menace by portraying it as incompetent mimicry.

English Models of Regional Dialects

The critic Kristina Bross argues that the assumption demonstrated by these texts, that both allied and enemy Indians spoke English, was 'a belief that severs the mission movement's connection of English (however imperfectly used) to regeneracy', and which undermined the careful rhetoric which had been built up around the figure of the Praying Indian (Bross, p.171). She claims that these depictions of Indians speaking broken English were based on the earlier Eliot Tracts, and that

[t]he passing of dialect representation from narratives and histories into the realm of poetry signals the symbolic importance of broken English to New England's understanding of the war, even though writers such as Tompson, Hubbard and Saltonstall use the idea in a much more stylized and crude way, and for opposite reasons to their predecessors

(Bross, pp.170, 172)

It is her argument throughout *Dry Bones* that it was the earlier depictions of Praying Indians which influenced later portrayals of Indians, including in captivity narratives and King Philip's War texts (pp.146-185). However, I would argue that she overestimates the importance of the Eliot Tracts in the colonies. Almost always printed in London, they were largely read on the other side of the Atlantic; and it is questionable whether such writers as Tompson, who appear from their writing to despise and to be ignorant of Indian culture, would have read them. Furthermore, there is another possible influence on Tompson which might throw light on his portrayal of broken English. The early modern period marked a point in which depictions of dialect and broken English became an important element in literature. Given Tompson's position as an educated and literary schoolmaster, it is entirely possible that he was influenced by the development of literary fashion in England as much as the portrayal of Christian Native Americans in the colonies. Furthermore, this would explain why Rowlandson, whose husband was a minister and so would be likely to have come into contact with transcriptions of broken English in the Eliot Tracts, and who displays a great mistrust of Praying Indians and would be likely to want to attack them in her text, at no point portrays them as speaking broken English in order to belittle them. If such depictions were associated with literary language, Rowlandson would be much less likely to have encountered such forms of writing than Tompson.

²⁶⁵ Homi K Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008 [first published 1994]) p.131

Paula Blank, in her book *Broken English*, has charted the development of the dialect comedy in the early modern period, arguing that the languages of Welsh, Scottish and Irish characters are often presented as a form of broken English, with speakers talking English with an accent, rather than their own language, or an entirely translated speech (pp.128-9).²⁶⁶ She claims that '[f]or some writers, the broken English of Irish speakers was an expression not only of a cultural difference (in the sense of a difference in forms or culture alone) but of a racial difference embodied in words; the claims of their speech were the claims of blood' (p.130).

Blank emphasises the connection between portrayals of individuals speaking broken English and a belief in their inferiority, quoting, for example, descriptions of the Welsh as being unable to speak English without 'vicious pronunciation of idiotisms'. "Broken English" thus remained [...] a sign that people still shared the barbarousness of other subjects who continued to resist "Englising", she argues (p.134). This can be seen to be directly relevant to the situation in New England during King Philip's War, when depictions of Indians speaking broken English are usually in the context of their resistance to colonial aims. Similarly, in the same way that I have argued that Tompson and Saltonstall do not attempt to portray Indian language realistically, but use a "broken" form in order to fulfil their own political aims, Blank argues that 'in recreating dialects for the stage, Renaissance authors were not primarily concerned with verisimilitude, but rather with making difference itself, unmistakable' (p.167).

The similarities between Blank's portrayal of the English development of regional dialect in drama and texts more generally and the portrayals of broken English by writers such as Saltonstall and Tompson are unmistakable. Her emphasis on the use of such depictions of dialect for the purposes of 'making the difference of language speak' (p.167) matches Saltonstall's and Tompson's use of a broken English to emphasise the otherness of the Native Americans they describe. Furthermore, the connection of such linguistic differences to race rather than culture suggests the disturbing ways in which linguistic difference was becoming associated with prejudice towards all Indians during the conflict. The connection made by Blank between the refusal to speak 'the King's English' and a refusal to be subjugated to English rule suggests another reason which might have influenced English demands, after King Philip's War, that Christian Native Americans be forced to learn English, rather than having religious books and pamphlets translated into Algonquian languages for them.

The difference between the depictions of "broken English" in the Eliot Tracts, and Saltonstall's and Tompson's equivalent some twenty years later, demonstrates how colonial depictions of Indian language had changed. While the earlier texts attempted to portray Indian language faithfully, even if it differed from English, the later texts attempt primarily to emphasise Indian difference. Such

²⁶⁶ Blank, Paula, *Broken English: Dialects and the Politics of Language in Renaissance Writings* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996) particularly chapter 5 (126-68)

developments suggest that a disturbing development in colonial attitudes towards the Native Americans of the region was becoming apparent during the stress of conflict.

Conclusions

Depictions of 'broken English' and the transparent language suggested in captivity narratives by the refusal of captives to discuss issues of language and translation, despite their surface dissimilarities, can be seen as two sides of the same coin. Although one manifestation downplays the role of language and attempts to disguise the need for translation and intercultural explanation at all, while the other draws attention to language and translation through its use of broken English, both represent ways in which English writers used portrayals of language in order to construct or defend their cultural identities. Manipulating the ways in which language is represented, or in which it is hidden from representation, allows these writers to create and represent themselves as unsullied by cultural contact with the enemy, or to emphasise the otherness of their enemies, and defuse the threat they posed by portraying them as culturally inferior to the colonists they were fighting.

Although these two techniques have opposite aims and use techniques which are inversions of each other, they also have one common effect: by denying their Indian opponents a depiction of their own language, their own valid cultural aims and intentions, they are in effect denying them their individuality, and their status as a valid culture in the region. Instead, they become only a pale imitation of the English, an Other to be fought or escaped, a measure of wickedness against which the English can measure their own moral redemption, but not a separate valid culture and society. Both foregrounding and disguising language in these texts has the same effect, of denying the Wampanoag and Narragansett and other Native American groups their own separate identity.

Conclusion

[C]oming up to Capt. Church, he fell upon his knees before him, and offer'd him what he had bro't, and speaking in plain *English*, said *Great Captain, you have killed Philip, and conquered his Country, for I believe, that I & my company are the last that War against the English, so suppose the War is ended by your means [...]*

Church, *Entertaining Passages*²⁶⁷

This passage is often quoted in histories of King Philip's War, as marking a highly symbolic end to the conflict. The Wampanoag man who is speaking, Annawon, was one of Philip's most trusted advisors; Philip himself was recently dead, and the last group resisting the colonists, led by Annawon, had been surprised by Church's troops and surrendered. Discussions of this passage often focus on the relationship between the two soldiers, who spend the night talking over old campaigns as equals; or on the objects Annawon hands to Church, which include '*Philips belt curiously wrought with Wompom*' and '*Philips Royalties which he was wont to adorn himself with when he sat in State*' (460). This moment is clearly intended by the writer to be symbolic of the ending of the war, and has more of the air of a formal surrender in European war than the accounts of 'skulking' Indian warfare in most accounts of the conflict would have led a distant reader to believe possible.

However, there is another element of this passage which had been less discussed, but which also marks a clear turning-point in the history of the region. Church, whose story was transcribed by his son long after the events recorded here, is consistently more comfortable about describing his interactions and friendships with Indians than any of the writers of accounts printed during or soon after the war, presumably because the fears and tensions associated with the real fear of the colonies being destroyed during King Philip's War had now long since dissipated, and the English now held a dominant position in the region. The relaxation of the paranoia and fear associated with wartime tensions may explain why Church is happy to portray himself as understanding Wampanoag; between Annawon's capture and the incident quoted above, Church has reported the Indian soldier only as speaking in his own language. When Church and his men appear suddenly, he cries out '*Howoh*' ['who is that?'], and when matters are settled, he responds '*Taubut*' ['it is well' or 'I am glad'].²⁶⁸ This is all he has said, and so his sudden and eloquent speech in perfect English creates a moment of shock for the reader and a change of atmosphere in the passage.

²⁶⁷ T[homas].C[hurch]. [Dictated by Benjamin Church], *Entertaining Passages Relating to Philip's War* (Boston, 1716), reprinted in *So Dreadfull a Judgement*, pp.393-470

²⁶⁸ *Entertaining Passages*, pp.458, 459; Translations given in the same text, notes 101 and 103, p.469

That Church not only tells the story in this way, but also emphasises Annawon's language and makes it unambiguous through his description of him as 'speaking in plain *English*', is as symbolic a gesture as his handing over of Philip's ceremonial jewellery to his captor. Having accepted that the English colonists have won, he submits not only physically, by kneeling, and politically, by handing over the symbols of Philip's power, but also linguistically: he abandons his own language, and informs Church that "*you have killed Philip, and conquered his Country [...] the War is ended by your means*" in the language of the colonist. As I argued in the introduction to this thesis, the question of who speaks what language to whom is inherently connected to where the power is located in a relationship: there could not be a much clearer demonstration of this idea than in Annawon's sudden switch to speaking "plain *English*".

Furthermore, Annawon's sudden fluency is matched by his movement from monosyllabic sullenness in Church's depiction of him as a stereotyped silent and stoical Native American leader, to not only an ability but a willingness to talk: Annawon "spent the remainder of the night in discourse [with Church]; and gave an account of what mighty success he had formerly in Wars against many Nations of *Indians*, when served *Asuhmequin*, *Philips* Father, &c." (460). With the act of submission to Church, the representative of the colonies, the character "Annawon" sheds his stereotypical taciturnity and native tongue with an ease which suggests that he could have done so at any moment had he chosen to do so, and becomes a different character, friendly and open. His discussion of his "mighty success" is defused by him limiting his stories to former wars against "many Nations of *Indians*"; the end of King Philip's War has only just been declared, but already the tales being told are not of contemporary warfare, but nostalgic memories of a legendary, if not yet mythical, Indian past.

This characterisation of "Annawon" is clearly a colonial fantasy, a Native American who accepts the need to submit to English rule and in doing so immediately becomes not only friendly and helpful, but perfectly adapted to the need and the language of the conqueror. Although no doubt there was a late-night conversation between Annawon and Church, Annawon would no doubt have presented his role somewhat differently. However, he was given no chance to do so; shortly after, Church returned from a trip to discover that Annawon had been killed in order to receive the bounty set on his head. As with so many of these texts, the role of the Native American is to play the political part required by the colonial author, and then to disappear.

To a certain extent this has been overlooked by scholars, who after reading extensively among the texts written in the atmosphere of fear and paranoia during 1675-6 tend to turn with relief to Church's text. His good relationships with the Indians under his command and his willingness to persuade enemy Indians to change sides and fight for the English rather than slaughtering as many of them as possible are certainly less disturbing to a modern reader than the attitudes of most of the writers during King Philip's War. However, this should not disguise the fact that Church's account, though

less bloodthirsty than those written during the period of conflict, demonstrates a similar undermining of the autonomy of Native American culture.

To some extent this again demonstrates the inability of the English colonists to accept difference in another culture. To return to Greenblatt's discussion of opacity, mentioned in the last chapter:

Europeans in the sixteenth century [...] find it difficult to credit another language with opacity. In other words, they render Indian language transparent, either by limiting or denying its existence or by dismissing its significance as an obstacle in communication between peoples.

Greenblatt, "Learning To Curse", p.44

Church, in the early eighteenth century, still displays the same desire to render Native American experience transparent. Either the Indians he encounters are enemies, speaking their own language (which Church provides no translation for in the text, allowing it to remain mysterious to anyone who does not speak Wampanoag), or they are allies, and become almost indistinguishable from the English. Although, to Church's credit, he emphasises that the two sides are opposite but equal, rather than arranged in a hierarchy with the English on top, his point of view is firmly colonial and he shows little interest in Indian culture, except as it enhances his own reputation.

This thesis ends by looking at this passage in detail, because it represents both an ending and a development of the themes discussed. Historians are generally agreed that the events of King Philip's War, discussed in the last two chapters, marked an important turning point in the region's history, when the New England colonists became the dominant power in the region. For this reason, it represented a convenient end point for my analysis of Puritan colonial identity. Not only did the colonists become dominant enough in the region that they display less fear over the dangers of contact with other groups; but increasing numbers of Baptists, Quakers, and non-Puritan merchants in the colony were leading to the settlements losing the close group identity which has been the subject of this study.

In this thesis, I have argued that the ways in which the seventeenth-century colonists used language reveal much to us about the ways they shaped their identities and tried to present their images and the narratives of their lives. I have discussed the ways in which they responded to questioning of their self-image by other groups they interacted with in what was, for them, a new and strange environment: Native American groups already living in the region; Christian Praying Indians who asked to be accepted into colonial Puritan religion and culture; and the Quakers who attacked the colonial Puritan orthodoxy from within.

In looking at all these relationships, I have tried to bring into the foreground questions of language which are usually passed over by scholars, but which can reveal much about such interactions. Small details, of how communication was carried out, who translated for whom, why writers choose to use a particular rhetorical style or draw their metaphors from a particular book of the Bible; all these reveal much about the ways in which seventeenth century colonists tried to present their different identities, whether cultural, social, national, or religious, and the ways in which they tried to use such presentations to claim or sustain their place in the region.

In each chapter of this thesis, I have looked at a different way in which colonial identity and power structures are revealed by the ways in which language is used by colonial writers. These challenges to established power structures ranged from an external group attempting to be accepted, in the case of the Praying Indians; to the challenging of the dominance of the orthodox religious authorities in the colonies, by both local and English Quakers; and to the attempt to deal with the more widespread and physical fears and difficulties created by war and conflict, both at an individual and a group level, in the King Philip's War texts and captivity narratives.

I argued in chapter three, "Usurping Colonial Narratives", that in contemporary texts defending Quaker and Puritan actions, it was not the facts which were being disputed, but the interpretation of those facts which were at issue. To some extent this applies to all the texts discussed in this thesis. There is little dispute over whether Mary Rowlandson was a captive, and later returned; or whether some Native Americans did express a desire to become Christians; or whether a destructive war was fought in the 1670s between the sachem Philip of the Wampanoag and his allies on one side, and the colonists and their Native American allies on the other. What is at issue – and what has been at issue since these events took place, thanks to the early establishment of a colonial printing press at Cambridge – is the way these events are interpreted, the narratives which they are used to tell. In looking at the language which was originally used to shape these narratives, at the assumptions and constructions which are usually hidden in the background of the telling, I have attempted to show the interconnections of language and identity and power in the region, and in doing so to reveal more about the Puritan culture which first sparked my interest in the subject many years ago.

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